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# Bull's Mistake

A Story of the Olden Times

By J. H. Stoddard

Illustrated by J. H. Stoddard

Readers Guide Series

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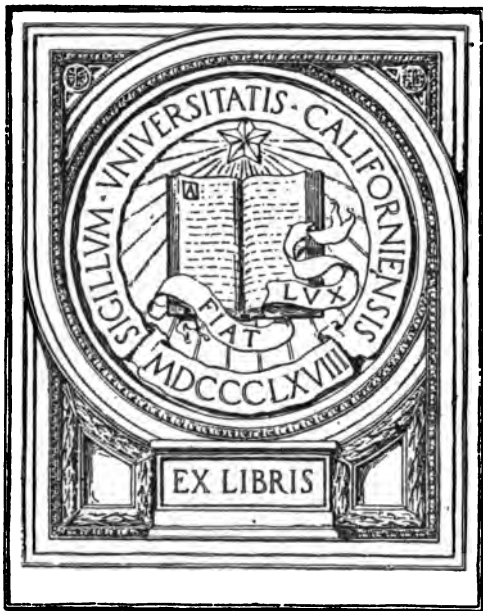
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**BILL'S MISTAKE**

**A STORY OF THE CALIFORNIA REDWOODS**

**BY**

**ROBERT GALE BARSON**



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**1921**  
**HARR WAGNER PUBLISHING CO.**  
**San Francisco, California**



TO THE  
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CONVENTION

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**TO THE REDWOODS**

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## BILL'S MISTAKE

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### I.

#### THE LAST BELL.

Dong! Dong! Dong!

It was a warm day in early June; one of those days when you just simply cannot stay in; a day that was never made for a school-room or for study; when a dip in the surf or a hike among the redwoods would be far more preferable than a drowsy school-room; a day that meant you **MUST** be out of doors. But it was all over, anyway—for a time, at least. The last bell was ringing. Vacation had begun for the students of the Santa Cruz High School.

Groups of boys and girls came pouring out of the doors, laughing and chattering, with happy, smiling faces; only occasionally a long-drawn face appearing among them—no doubt that of some child who had failed to be promoted. But they were all glad to be free for a long two months to come; all were glad to get out into the beautiful summer day.



## BILL'S MISTAKE

"Cut that out now!" cried one of three boys, who came tumbling rather than walking down the stairs, each eager to reach the ground first. The boy who spoke was in the lead, and the other two were holding him, trying to prevent him from reaching the ground first. As he spoke he turned and gave his tormentors each a punch.

"You don't need to think you've always got to be first, Tom!" one of the other boys answered sharply, after he finally succeeded in reaching the ground first.

"I'm NOT always first, but when I make up my mind to do a thing, I usually do it," Tom replied decidedly.

"Did you get through, Tom?" asked Jim, the smaller of the other two boys. By this time the three boys were standing in a group on the school ground.

"Yes, I got through!" he replied, as if there were no doubt about his being promoted.

"Only by a scratch, though," added Ned, the third boy.

"Well, ain't that enough? What more do you want?"

"I got through all right," Jim said, happily. He was a class below the other two boys; he had two years yet before him, while the others had but one.

Ned and Jim, or, rather, Edward and James Nelson, were brothers. They lived with their parents on the east side of the city, near the foot-

hills. Their father was engaged in light farming and vegetable raising, and his boys proved two useful assistants, when they were not busy with school work.

"It's some warm today, isn't it?" Ned remarked.

"You bet!" Tom replied. "Let's beat it now, fellows. I want to go down and take a swim in the surf. It'll feel good a day like this. Want t' come along?"

"I'm afraid we can't," Ned answered disappointedly, as the three started to leave the school grounds. "Father told us to hurry home after school; he wants us to do some weeding."

"All right, I'll go alone then." As long as Tom got there that was the main thing with him.

"Where's Bill?" Jim inquired, looking around. "Ain't you going to wait for him?"

"He's gone on," Tom said quickly. "He's got to get down to the store and work. No foolin' for Bill."

So the boys went down the steps and, turning, continued down the hill on their homeward way.

Tom, or as he was sometimes called, Thomas Lawrence, was a small boy for his age—perhaps seventeen—and fat—not excessively, but just enough so that it could not help but be noticed. He had dark brown hair, almost black, dark eyes—eyes that sparkled with mischief, but whether they were dark brown or black it was hard to determine.



Tom had a round, fat, handsome face — always beaming. Always? Nearly always would be nearer the truth, for Tom had a quick temper, and when he became angry his face was very different from the usual smiling face.

At that time Tom had the reputation of being the worst boy on the school ground to get into fights. When things went wrong, he simply HAD to let himself out some way; so his fat fists began flying, and the boy who happened to be nearest usually received the benefit of his wrath. Then, ten minutes after the fight was over, Tom, or nobody else, could believe that Tom ever got into such trouble; his face would be beaming again. If any one spoke of the fight a short time afterward, he would say, "Did I?" as though he had forgotten entirely about it.

Whatever Tom did though that was not just right, it was not because he was a bad boy; it was just simply because he could not help it. He would always say, after such happenings, "I didn't mean to," and that seemed to make everything all right, as far as Tom was concerned.

Tom, like all other boys, liked to have a good time. When he did not have to attend school it would be hunting, fishing, swimming, or boating; and the games, too, whether it was base-ball, football, tennis, or others, Tom dearly loved them all. There was one other game that Tom loved—cards. He also liked to run races; Tom's legs were short, but when they got a good start they certainly

could go; and such that few boys on the school ground could outrun him.

Tom was bright and he was quick, whether it was in the games or in the classes; for busy as he was, he often found time to study; something the teacher just insisted upon having him do, he would settle down and prepare as good as anybody. The result would be that Tom's teacher would say, "Thomas, that's just fine!" But it was not very often that any teacher of Tom's had occasion to make such a remark. Tom preferred to fool rather than study. But, nevertheless, he always managed to get promoted.

Everybody liked Tom. The boys and girls liked him because he was "funny" and always saying things that made them laugh.

There was one other thing about Tom that must be mentioned to make his description complete: he was an awful boy to swear. Several times the principal had to call him aside and severely reprimand him for the bad language he used on the school ground.

Thomas Lawrence was an orphan; his parents died when he was little more than a baby; he could scarcely remember them. His mother died first and the father soon followed. After the death of his parents, Tom came to live with his aunt—his mother's sister—in Santa Cruz, where he had entered school in the primary class.

The boy had lived ever since his arrival in Santa Cruz with his aunt, Mrs. Amy Howland, in her

modest little home in Laurel Street. He loved her as he would have loved his own mother. If he was naughty toward her, it was just because he could not help it; he did not mean to.

Tom loved Santa Cruz. "It's the finest place in all the world," he would say. "I want to stay here always."

When the boy grew older, an uncle of his—his father's brother, who lived in San Francisco—wanted Tom to come and live with him; but Tom just would not go. "I can look out for myself; and besides if I went Aunt Amy would be left alone," he had said when his uncle had urged him to go to the city and live with him.

"Well, his uncle had replied, "if I hear no bad reports, you can stay with Aunt Amy in Santa Cruz. But remember! I am your guardian, and if I say 'Come,' you will have to do it; so you had better be a good boy."

Tom always remembered it, too. It was the one thing above all others that helped to keep him on the straight and narrow path—at least, as near on it as he could keep. But then Tom was not a bad boy at all; if he did naughty things, he had a very good reason for so doing; he just simply could not help it. Tom always wanted to do what was right.

When Tom's father died he left his child a little property; arranging it so that the boy would have so much a month, until he would be of age; then if anything was left, Tom would have it for his own. Tom's uncle was his guardian and sent him

the monthly allowance, part of which he gave his aunt for his support; the remainder he had for himself. It was not near enough, though, for his modest requirements; he was always running short.

The trio of boys continued down the hill, among dozens of others.

"I'm goin' fishin' Monday," Tom remarked, as he threw his cap into the air, and tried to catch it on his head as it came down. "Can't you fellows go along?"

"I'm afraid we can't," Jim replied softly. "We will have to work nearly all vacation if we expect to earn our bicycles."

"I shall have to go alone then. Bill can't go; he always has to work. I'm glad I don't have to work."

"I always feel sorry for Bill," Ned said thoughtfully, "the way he has to work, and with no father or mother to help him. He seems to do pretty well though."

"Bill's all right," Tom answered. "He's the finest fellow in all the world." The boy was then walking backwards in front of the other two, because he often said that it was easier for him to walk backwards than forwards. Just as he was about to cross the railroad track at the foot of the hill, he stumbled, and would have fallen if Ned had not grabbed him by the arm to steady him.

"Look out, Tom!" he said warningly. "You'll hurt yourself some day doing that."

"Don't worry about me! I can look out for

myself," he replied bravely, as he righted himself, also turning to continue "right-side-to" the rest of the way.

"Hold on, fellers." Some one was calling from the rear. The boys looked around. A tall, long-legged boy was running toward them, down the hill, as fast as his long legs could carry him.

"It's Bill!" Tom uttered, rather surprised.

"What's your hurry?" Bill asked as he at length joined the group. "I was waiting for you in the school yard."

"Thought you'd gone on," Tom replied courteously. "You'll be late to work."

"Oh, no, Tom, we're out early today; don't you know that?" asked the newcomer, almost out of breath.

"Early? It seems later to me than usual. I thought school never would end today. It's too nice to be in school any way."

The boys continued their walk four abreast.

"Yes; I'm glad to be out for a while though, for one," Jim said.

"And just think, Bill," Ned added joyfully. "In one more year we'll be through for good. What would you like to be, Bill, when you get settled in life? I've often thought I'd like to be a lawyer."

"I don't know," Bill replied slowly. "I never think about the future much; the present is enough for me to handle, just now. I'll wait and see what turns up."

"I'd rather be a banker," Tom edged in. He had not been asked to give his opinion, but he was doing so anyhow. "Bankers have more money than anybody; all they have to do is to go to the bank and get what money they want and go off and spend it. I tell you it's a BANK for me."

"You've got an uncle that's connected with a bank, haven't you?" Ned asked. "Maybe he could get you a job in the bank when you get through school."

"I don't want any job. If I can't own the bank I don't want anything to do with it."

"If you owned a bank would you give me a job?" Bill asked of Tom. "I'd rather have a job in a bank than to own one."

"You bet I would," he answered truthfully. "I'd do anything in the world for you, Bill, old man."

"Thanks, Tom!"

Thus the four boys continued down Walnut Avenue, laughing and talking, first about one thing, then about another. They were happy.

Bill, or to be exact, William Crawford, was a tall, strong, healthy-looking specimen, the kind of a boy that develops into the large, well-proportioned man. He had a fine face—not a handsome face, but a face that showed character. To look at him one could not help but notice the honest integrity that showed out plain in the boyish face. One look at the youth would be enough for any one to know that he was an honest, well-meaning boy—a boy that could be trusted.

Bill had brown hair—chestnut brown, slightly curly, and brown, bright-looking eyes. His skin was tanned from much outdoor life, and his hands were rough from hard work; for work and Bill were twin brothers.

Bill was a youth whom everybody liked and admired. He always did his best, whether it was work or play—for he liked to work, and he liked to play. He was not a shirk; when there was work to be done, he was ready to do it. His motto was “work first and play afterwards.”

Bill was unfortunate; his parents both having died, he was left alone in the world without an adviser—without a supporter. He had to earn his own living as well as attend school; this meant work before school, after school, Saturdays and vacations. He had little time for pleasure; but he did not complain. Bill had made up his mind long before that he would do the best he could for himself; and he would have to be satisfied with that. In the school-room he did his best; it was nothing extra, for he had little time to study, but such as it was was far better than that of many others who had far greater opportunities.

Bill was of a quiet nature; he seldom spoke except when he had something important to say—and if so, he said it; otherwise he believed in keeping still. This was one reason why Tom liked Bill so well. He liked a good listener; then, whatever talking was necessary Tom could always do that himself. Bill was also good-natured. This

was another reason why Tom and he got along so well together. Bill was always willing to give in and let Tom have his own way.

Bill had not lived in Santa Cruz long; he arrived the summer previous and had spent only the past year in the high school. It was not his entrance year though, for that he had spent in his home town in Ohio. One year more and he would graduate—if everything went well. Then perhaps he would be able to do better for himself.

William Crawford was born in Warren, Ohio, where he spent his childhood with his parents. His father was a dissolute man, giving little thought to the support of his wife and son; he reveled in drink and card playing until he became nothing but a wreck and a burden to the woman he had promised to do so much for; and then after a time—like all others of his kind—he passed away, leaving his wife and child alone, to make their way through life the best they could. Bill scarcely remembered his father.

His mother, one of the finest of women, always did her best for her boy. Hard as it was both to earn the living and keep up the home, she succeeded in making a happy, though humble, home for herself and boy, and sent the lad to school. Her greatest hope was that her son would grow up to be a good man.

As Bill grew older he began to help his mother earn their living. He became a newsboy; early in the mornings and late in the evenings, he was



out doing the best he could to help with his support. He did his studying whenever he could find a few spare moments.

All went well for some years; the mother and son were very happy together. But just when the mother wanted to live most, for her boy's sake; just when she felt that he most needed her to watch over him, she sickened, and in a few weeks was gone.

When she felt that she must go, that there was no help for her, she called her boy to her bedside and in her dying hour sobbed these words: "Oh, my boy! Promise your dying mother that you will always be a good boy; always do your best. Promise me! Oh, promise me, that you will never touch any liquor, or never play with cards. They were what caused your father's downfall. Oh, promise me!" And he promised.

After his mother had been laid to rest beside his father, Bill took what little money there was left and bought a ticket for San Francisco. His only living relative, a brother of his father, lived there, and his mother had bidden him to go to his uncle.

"Perhaps he will give you a home and help you till you are a little older," were among the last words of the dying mother.

The unfortunate youth reached San Francisco safely and found his uncle living in a handsome home on Pacific Avenue, where he had every luxury and convenience that money could produce. But it only took Bill a few days to find out that he was

an unwelcome guest; the help that he hoped to receive was not there. Rather than live in a home where he felt that he was not wanted, the disappointed boy thought it better to strike out for himself. He had always worked—and worked hard—was strong and healthy, and he knew that he would succeed by doing the best he knew how. Being used to a small town he thought it better to leave the city; besides he felt that his expenses would be less in a smaller city.

So, after a few days, he bid his uncle good-bye and left the city. Some one told him to go to Santa Cruz if he wanted a smaller city. He came here; liked it; and remained here. No one who has ever been in Santa Cruz will blame him for his decision.

A few days after his arrival, Bill procured work at the H. H. Howard Drug Company, on Pacific Avenue, doing odd jobs, cleaning, delivering, and whatever else he was called upon to do. At the beginning of the fall semester he commenced his studies at the high school—working when he was not in school. He made his home with Tom and his aunt.

At last the group reached Pacific Avenue, and Bill turned up the avenue to go to his place of employment. As he left them Tom called:

“Don’t forget, Bill—eight o’clock, sharp!”

“All right, Tom!” Bill called back. “I’ll be home long before that.”

Then the three boys proceeded on their way

down the main street for half a block, after which the two brothers crossed over to Soquel Avenue, that thoroughfare leading in the direction of their home. Tom continued southward toward the beach.

Before parting he said to the other boys: "I'm sorry you can't come along. Don't forget, though, fellows—eight o'clock, sharp!"

"All right, Tom, we'll be there," Ned replied.

## II.

## A SUPPER FOR TWO.

"Do you think this will be enough, Bill?"

"No! That's not half enough, Tom. That isn't enough for one of us. Remember, we're not going to have much else."

"Then I'll fix some more," Tom replied willingly. He was shelling the peas for supper. Bill had just made the fire. That afternoon before Tom arrived home from school his Aunt Amy had been called away to Watsonville. Her brother had been badly hurt in a runaway; so she hurried away as quickly as possible, leaving a note for Tom telling him of the trouble, and for the boys to get supper the best they could. They were doing their best.

"I'll peel some potatoes and put them to boil—then, I think, I'll boil some eggs—that ought to be enough," Bill remarked slowly.

"Can't you fix them some other way, Bill? I don't like boiled eggs very well."

"How do you want them?"

"Scrambled!"

"I don't believe I know how to scramble eggs; at least I never tried. Shall I fry them?"

"All right, any way that suits you; I sha'n't be particular at a time like this."

During this talk Tom slowly continued with his pea-shelling and Bill proceeded to prepare the potatoes, which he at length put on the stove to boil.

"I think we'll eat here in the kitchen, so's not to make a mess in the dining-room," Bill said thoughtfully, as he took some eggs out of the cupboard and placed them on the table. "You're making such a mess here."

"Am I? What am I doing?" Tom looked around wonderingly.

"You're getting peas all over everywhere."

"So I am." The boy could see what his chum referred to as he looked more closely at the floor. "I can't help it though, Bill; every time I open a pod they all hop out and go where they please. There goes one now, over there where you are. Pick it up—if you don't want them on the floor!"

Bill stooped and picked up the fugitive pea, came across the room, and placed it in the pan with the others.

"There goes another! Get it, Bill!"

"I'm not going to keep picking them up as fast as you drop them," was the decided reply as he sat down by his friend's side and commenced helping with the shelling. "If we don't hurry we won't have them on time."

"Is this enough to suit you now?" Tom asked a few minutes later. He picked up the pan and

held it up nearer Bill, for his closer inspection, wiggling the pan enough to set the peas rolling back and forth.

"Why not finish them, Tom? There's only about a dozen left. The more we do, the more there'll be to eat."

"Right you are! Why didn't I think of that sooner?" Tom resumed his pea-shelling with renewed vigor. "You're dropping some yourself, Bill," he soon added, as one of his companion's peas went rolling over the floor. "There goes another of mine—so I can't talk."

When at length, the peas were all shelled, Bill took them and prepared them for the stove.

"Get some knives and forks, Tom, and put them on the table."

"Where shall I get them?"

"Look in the closet. You'll find them somewhere," he answered, while washing the peas.

Tom slowly arose from where he had been sitting, walked to the closet and after examining its contents for a few minutes returned to the table with the knives and forks.

"See if there's any bread," Bill directed, after he had put the peas on the stove to cook.

Tom again slowly walked to the closet and after a moment spoke: "Here's some."

"Well, cut some and put it on the table."

"What shall I cut it with?" stupidly. Tom certainly was not a born house-keeper.

"Take that bread knife lying there beside it and cut a few slices."

The other cut a couple of chunks of bread and then after placing it on the table, sat down in his former position.

"I think I'll fry the eggs now," Bill at length said, as he placed the frying pan on the stove. "Get me two plates."

"Why didn't you tell me before I sat down?" Tom muttered as he slowly arose and went to the closet and procured the plates, which he carried over to Bill as he stood before the stove.

"Put them on the stove to warm, Tom."

Tom did as he was directed, and then stood watching Bill as he greased the pan and commenced breaking the eggs into it.

"Do you want one or two?"

"Two," was the decided reply. A moment later he said: "Bill, you look like an old woman with that apron on." The youth had tied one of Aunt Amy's aprons on to protect his clothing.

"I can't help it if I do," was the solemn reply.

Then there was silence for a few moments as the two boys stood by the stove. Tom watched the eggs as they sputtered in the grease. After they were done—to Bill's satisfaction—he took the turner and proceeded to place two of the eggs on each plate.

"If it ever comes to the worst now, Bill, I believe I could cook myself an egg," Tom said softly when his chum finally had the eggs safely

on the plates, after which he took the pot of peas and divided them as near equally as possible on the plates; he also placed a potato for each. Then the boys sat down to eat their supper.

Tom was the first to place a forkful of peas in his mouth. "Bill!" he exclaimed. "I don't believe these peas are done; they don't taste just right."

Bill tasted them. "I forgot the salt. Get some from the closet and put it on. It'll do just as well."

"That's the trouble, then, is it? I never should have thought of salt, myself, though." The lad arose, went to the closet for the salt and soon returned with the shaker, which he began shaking over his peas immediately after sitting down. "This is pepper."

"Well, get the other one. We need pepper, too, though."

Tom again went to the closet, returning with the salt-shaker. After he had salted his peas to his satisfaction, he again commenced to eat. "They're all right now," he said, after eating a few forkfuls. "They're good, too! Things taste better when you fix 'em yourself, don't they, Bill?"

"Yes, Tom. That's always the way in this world. When you have to work for a thing you appreciate it more."

"I believe you're right. It's so in this case."

Tom was a poor worker; he knew nothing about



work, nor did he want to know; he was lazy and worthless as far as work was concerned. He liked to play games and go fishing; that was life enough for Tom. The only work he had to do was to cut the lawn for his Aunt Amy; and that he always left until Sunday so that Bill could help—or rather so that Bill could cut the lawn while Tom talked to him. But then Bill did not mind; he liked to cut the lawn and he liked to hear Tom talk; and Tom liked to talk; so they were both happy.

Aunt Amy had always weeded the flowers herself because Tom did not know which were the weeds and which the plants. One time she set Tom to work to weed some young pansy plants which she had planted for a border.

"Now, Tom, be careful! These are the plants. Do you see?" and his aunt showed him the plants. "I have planted one every six inches. Now be careful! There are some weeds there that look something like the pansies. Do you think you know them?"

"Yes, I think so; I'll fix 'em all right, Aunt Amy," the boy had willingly replied.

And Tom did "fix 'em," for when his aunt returned a little later to see how Tom was getting along, she found only a row of tiny weeds—that looked something like pansy plants—and the pansies had been carefully removed. Of course she felt badly.

"What have you done, Tom! You've removed

all my pansies and have left only weeds," she said disappointedly, when she discovered his mistake.

"Have I? I didn't mean to, Aunt Amy." The boy's eyes had filled with tears. "I never could see any difference in them—until the flowers come, any way."

"Well, never mind, Tom. It's all right. You did the best you could," his aunt replied, when she saw how badly he felt.

So after this unfortunate experience, Aunt Amy thought it best to do her own weeding. It was the same with everything else that she had tried to get Tom to do—he was always bungling; so she finally gave up hope of ever getting him to do anything useful.

Tom was the first to finish his egg, pea and potato supper. He leaned back in his chair.

"Have you got anything else? I haven't had enough yet," he remarked.

"There's some pie in the closet; I guess we'll eat that. I'll get it in a minute."

"Take your time! That'll about finish me, I think. You're a good cook, Bill. How do you know all these things?"

"I used to help my mother," he said sadly. "When she was sick I had to do all the house-work and care for her, too."

"You certainly are a better cook than I. If it were left for me to do, I'm afraid that we would have to eat things raw. I can beat you in a foot-race though. Want t' try after supper?"

"I thought you had something else for to-night?" Bill reminded, as he got up and went for the pie.

"That's so; I nearly forgot."

Bill brought the pie and placed a piece before Tom, who immediately began to dispose of it; the other piece he put at his own place and after sitting down began to eat it.

"Shall we cut the lawn, Sunday, Bill, or let it go another week?" Tom inquired, with his mouth full of pie.

"No, Tom, not another week. We must do it Sunday; it should have been done last week."

"But if I am going fishing early Monday morning I shall have to get my tackle ready Sunday. Then I shall have to clean my gun; I might want to take it along, too."

"You'll have plenty of time for all," was the decided reply.

"And then we've planned for a game Sunday. Don't forget! Besides, Aunt Amy might insist on me going to church like she did last Sunday. I hope she don't come until Monday. How are we going to do everything?"

"It wouldn't hurt you to get up a half-hour earlier."

"I wouldn't like to do that. We'll hope Aunt Amy won't get back until Monday; that'll let us out on the church racket any way."

"But you may get tired of my cooking before Monday. Did you think of that?"

"I'm not kicking, yet. This supper has been a howling success. You are a wonder, Bill." And with that, Tom, having finished his pie, leaned back in his chair.

"Have you had enough, Tom?" the other inquired, as he finished his own pie.

"Yep, I couldn't eat another bite if you pay me. Say, Bill!" Tom said suddenly, "have you made up your mind what you'll have for breakfast yet?"

Bill was silent for a few seconds while he sat thinking.

"Better make up your mind to-night! Then you won't have to think about it all night."

"I think I'll make some coffee," Bill finally remarked slowly.

"Yes, I must have my coffee. What else will you have?"

"Then I can fry some eggs and potatoes. I think that ought to be enough."

"Eggs!" Tom echoed. "Can't you think of something else, Bill? I'm gettin' tired of eggs; we've had them every meal since Aunt Amy left."

"There's some bacon in the cupboard; maybe we can have some of that, instead."

"Have both! Then we'll be sure and have enough."

So their breakfast was arranged for satisfactorily, and the boys arose from their chairs. "Now, Bill, don't you think we've got time for a foot-race, to the hill and back, before the boys come?"

"We'll have to do the dishes first."

"Nothin' doin'. Why not leave them? Aunt Amy can do them when she returns," replied Tom. He never believed in doing anything that he could get any one else to do—in the work line, at any rate.

"No!" Bill said. "That wouldn't be nice; your aunt will have enough to do without washing our dirty dishes. You get a pan and put the dishes in, and I'll get a broom and sweep up these peas; you've got them all over everywhere." The youth accordingly started for the broom.

"All right, Bill!" Tom said cheerfully, "whatever you say goes; you seem to be running things here. Which pan shall I take?" With all his helplessness—to say the least—Tom was willing to help as long as Bill was there.

"Take that big one. Put the dishes in, then I will pour some hot water over them. Scrape them first though."

Bill began to sweep, and Tom after taking the pan down from the hook and placing it on the table, commenced picking up the dirty dishes. "There's nothing to scrape, Bill!" he called.

"Well, then, put them in as they are," Bill answered, as he continued sweeping the floor. When done he replaced the broom, and taking the kettle of hot water from the stove went over to the table and poured its contents over the dishes. "Now, would you rather wash or dry them?" he

asked, as he placed the kettle on the table.

"I'll wash."

"Get to work then. Take off your coat and roll up your shirt-sleeves. Tom immediately took off his coat and rolled up his shirt-sleeves according to his adviser's directions, while he got some clothes from the drawer for washing and drying the dishes.

"Ouch!" he heard Tom cry out as he was returning.

"What is the matter with you?"

"That water's hot! I burned my finger," he lamented, placing the injured member in his mouth to console it.

"That isn't hot at all!" Bill replied sharply, after testing the water with his finger. "If you can't stand that you better let me wash and you can dry."

"Perhaps you better fix 'em. You know more about doing these things than I," he responded, after taking his finger from his mouth. Thus the boys changed places. Bill soon began washing the dishes and laying them out on the table.

"Get to work now!" he said, "and be careful and don't break them."

Tom did not break any, but he did drop one—the first he touched; it was too slippery for him; he could not hold it. But by the time he had the dish picked up and was about to take a cloth and dry it, Bill had finished the washing.

"Give me the cloth," he said impatiently. "I

can dry them while you're getting ready." In a few minutes he had the dishes dried and put away.

"Did you feed the hens, Tom?"

"No! I never thought of them until this minute. Did you get the eggs, Bill?" Tom suddenly thought of something that needed attending to.

"No, I haven't been near them. Did your aunt tell you to feed them?"

"I don't know."

"Didn't you read the note?"

"Yes, but I don't remember anything but about getting supper."

"Where is the note? Get it so I can see!"

"It's in my pocket." Tom put his hand in his coat pocket, which he had already replaced, and drew forth a much crumpled piece of paper, which he handed to Bill.

"Yes; she said for you to be sure and feed the hens," Bill remarked, after he had carefully read the note.

"Well, then we better do it. If you feed 'em, Bill, I'll get the eggs."

"Come on then; it'll soon be dark." Both immediately went out the back door onto the porch. Here, Bill took a can full of wheat from a sack which stood on the porch, and then they hurried to the rear of the yard where the hens were confined. Bill commenced throwing the wheat into the yard; the hens had mostly gone to roost for the

night, but, upon seeing the wheat flying over the fence they made no objection to jumping down and disposing of the grain. For a few moments the boys stood looking through the wires at the feeding hens, then Bill said: "Now get the eggs, Tom, while they're out of the hen-house."

"Where are they?" the other asked stupidly.

"Go in the hen-house and look in those boxes," Bill ordered severely. He was getting disgusted with Tom.

Tom opened the hen-house door and started toward the nests on the opposite side of the coop. He stopped half-way and said: "There's a hen on one box, Bill. Shall I scare her off?"

"You may as well."

"Shoo!" Tom said, waving his hand at the hen; but it was not necessary to "shoo," for the sight of the boy was enough to send the hen flying out into the yard. "Look at 'em!" he continued, as he stooped before the box. "There must be a dozen or two of 'em. What shall I do with 'em all?" As he spoke he stooped lower and began taking the eggs from the nest.

Bill was standing at the door. "Wait a minute! Maybe she's setting." He entered the coop and advanced towards Tom, who stood with an egg in each hand. "Yes, those eggs have been set on. Put them back!"

Tom replaced the eggs "How can you tell?" he asked wonderingly, as he looked up at his companion.



"Well, they're not fresh looking. Here's a box on the floor which I think your aunt must have had over her—to keep the others away. It either got knocked off, or else she took it off for fear we might not notice the hen."

"Get those other eggs in those boxes. There's three in one, four in the other, and two in this last one," he added as he started toward the door.

Tom stooped and gathered the eggs from the first nest with his right hand and then placed them into his left, holding it close to his body so that he might the better hold them.

"Don't take the nest-eggs, Tom," Bill cautioned.

"Don't get funny, Bill. Don't you suppose I know enough not to take the nest-eggs?" the boy replied smartly.

"Yes, but you have one in your hand any way."

"Have I? You're foolin'." He looked down at the eggs with a puzzled look. "Which one is it?" he inquired softly, a silly expression coming on his face.

"It's that one underneath."

"Oh! That one!" The boy extracted the tell-tale egg that had been partly hidden by the others. "Oh, well, I couldn't see that!" he exclaimed, as if the fact of the nest-egg being hidden excused him for his stupidity. "They do look alike, though, don't they?" he added, as he carefully examined the false egg, turning it around in his hand. "No wonder the old hens are fooled."

"Hurry, Tom. The hens want to come in and go to roost."

Tom began gathering the eggs from the second nest. "Wait!" Bill spoke. "I'll get you the can to put them in—you'll drop them."

"No I won't!" he answered positively. But he did drop—one, and when he went to grab that to stop it from falling, he dropped another. "Look what I did, Bill! I'm always getting myself into trouble," he said, as Bill returned with the can. Tom stood there looking down at the broken eggs. Bill took the other eggs from him and put them in the can quickly, without a word; then he gathered the other eggs from the nests and put them also in the can. At last he stooped, gathered up the two broken eggs, and holding them in his hand left the coop and went with them into the house. Tom followed, and shutting the hen-house door also went into the house.

"Bill, you're a wonder; you know everything," Tom said, after they were both back in the kitchen. "Why couldn't I have been smart like you?"

"Tom!" Bill turned and looked at his chum; and then in his most powerful tone addressed him again; he had stood Tom's foolishness long enough: "Tom, you ARE smart; you are far smarter than I am! And you are quick! The trouble with you is you don't apply yourself; you're lazy and worthless! All you ever think of are—games, and having a good time! Why don't you learn to work and make yourself useful in this world! Then

you'll always find time for games in between times. It isn't a case of smartness, Tom; it's a case of downright laziness. You're trying to shove your work off onto me. Why don't you learn to do something?"

And all the while this "lecturing" was going on, Tom, shamefacedly, with bowed head, looked first at one foot, then at the other. A few moments after Bill stopped talking, Tom was silent, then he spoke:

"What could I do?"

"What could YOU do?" Bill repeated in his former severe tones. "There's lots of things you could do. You could cut the lawn—instead of leaving it for me to do; you could get up in the morning and make the fire for your aunt—instead of staying in bed until breakfast is ready; you could bring in the wood, clean up the yard, sweep the walk, feed the hens, and get the eggs. I've been doing some of these things to help your aunt; but you're the one who ought to do it."

When Bill paused this time the other quickly raised his eyes and looked at his companion's face. "I believe you're right, Bill," he said softly. Then he again dropped his eyes and gazed at his feet. Tom was beginning to see a few things for himself any way.

"Then, another thing, Tom. You've got an uncle that's willin' to do a great deal for you if you'll only let him. (Bill thought of his own uncle and the help he would like to have had from him.)

I've got no one to help me. Why don't you let him help you?"

Tom then raised his eyes for good. "But," he objected, "I'd have to leave here if I did, and I'm not going to leave Santa Cruz for any uncle that I may have."

"Well, you ought to learn something any way," Bill advised kindly. "You'll have to work in a few more years and you won't know how. Better begin now."

"I believe I shall," was the eager response.

## III.

## WHEREIN BILL MAKES A MISTAKE.

"Doesn't it seem good, Bill—to think there are no lessons to get to-night?" Tom remarked with a beaming face, as the two boys waited in their room for the expected company. He was reclining in a rocker with head thrown back, gazing at a picture of George Washington on the opposite wall, which his aunt had given him for a birthday present. "For my part I'm tired of this thing of studyin' three or four hours every night."

"Yes, Tom, it does seem good. But I don't know about your studying three or four hours every night," Bill answered from his bed, where he had stretched himself out for a few minutes' rest.

Soon after Bill's arrival in Santa Cruz, when he and Tom began to get "chummy" Tom got his aunt to let Bill have a room in her house. She was very glad to have the extra money that Bill paid her each week; Bill was glad because it was more reasonable for him than where he had previously boarded; and Tom was glad so that he had somebody to talk to, night and day; so they were all satisfied.

Later—when Tom and Bill got still “chummier”—Tom asked his aunt to let Bill move his bed into his room, so that they could talk without having to call through the wall.

So here they were in their bedroom as well as reception-room, for it was a good-sized apartment and served them for all purposes. Their room opened onto a side porch so that it could be used without disturbing the rest of the house.

“Didn’t I commence studyin’ last night at seven, and wasn’t I still studyin’ at eleven?” Tom replied to Bill’s comment.

“You did last night, but that’s only once; besides, you only did it in order that you might get your experiments written up, so you could get through. If you hadn’t left it until the last thing, you wouldn’t have had to do so much at once.”

“Well, I couldn’t find time any sooner, Bill; there’s so much to do.”

“Besides, you needn’t complain; you know you only copied mine; so you got off easy. It’s lucky for you that the teacher didn’t find you out.”

“Well it’s work to copy any way. I’m always leaving out words and sometimes entire lines; then I have to squeeze them in somewhere; and then I never know what the figures mean; I never could see any sense in this experiment business. It’s a good thing the teacher don’t examine them carefully. Isn’t it, Bill?”

“You ought to study more, though, Tom—for yourself—or you’ll never know anything. If you’d

study your lessons and learn them, you'd see more sense in things. You do nothing but fool."

"Well, don't I try?" He was leaning his head back on the rocker and rolling it to and fro. "But when I read the lessons I always find myself thinking about what I shall do Saturday; and when I get through, I know more about what I am going to do Saturday than I do about the lessons; or else if I don't do that, I find myself asleep before I get through. So you see I'm wasting time whichever way it goes. It's no use; I may as well enjoy life while I've got the chance."

"You ought to learn to concentrate your thoughts on something besides having a good time; if you don't you'll never get along in this world, when you have to go to work; you will some day, you know."

"Not until I'm twenty-one," he replied, as he continued to roll his head on the back of the rocker. "I've enough to last me till then—so I sha'n't worry about it for a while yet; I hope it will be a long time coming. Besides I don't believe I was ever born to work anyhow; we don't seem to agree." After this last remark he suddenly sat upright in his chair, and turned his head in the direction of the door, as though he heard something. "I wonder if the fellows aren't coming?" he said, leaning back again in the rocker.

"It's not time yet," Bill answered, as his eyes wandered over the ceiling.

"It must be long after time," was the impatient

reply. Time always went slow to Tom when there was something good in sight.

Both boys took their watches from their pockets and looked at them.

"It's eight now," Tom said, replacing his watch.

"Hardly," Bill answered, replacing his own.

"It is by my watch," Tom corrected.

"Not by mine."

"You're slow."

"You're fast."

But just then the argument was stopped by a sound from without like two boys stumbling up the stairs. Tom jumped up and opened the door to admit Jim and Ned.

"Hurry up, you fellows! Why don't you learn to get around on time? We've been waitin' an hour for you." Tom was impatient, for some reason or other.

"I hope we're not late," said Ned softly, as they came into the room and removed their caps.

"You're not late at all," Bill called from the bed.

"Get up here now, Bill, so we can get started before midnight!" Tom cried, and at the same time placing a small table in the center of the room. "We have two chairs and I'll just get two more from out of Aunt Amy's rooms." Tom started for the door leading into the other part of the house.

"Can I help?" asked Jim, wanting to offer his services.



"No!" Tom called back sharply, as he left the room. "Don't you suppose I can carry a couple of chairs without assistance?"

"Tired, Bill?" Ned asked kindly.

"A little," he responded. "I always believe in resting when I get the chance."

Tom returned in a couple of minutes carrying the two chairs, which he placed by the table. Jim and Ned, who had been standing, up till this time, sat down, drawing their chairs close up to the table. Tom got a chair for himself from the opposite corner of the room and sat down opposite Jim. "Jim," he said, "you are the best player in the crowd, so I take you. I am the poorest—so that will even things up." Then he took a deck of cards from his pocket and commenced drawing them from the case. Everything was ready. Just as Bill was the better at getting supper and doing up the work, so Tom was the better at preparing for a card game.

"Hurry up here now, Bill—you lazy thing! We're all ready. Get up off that bed!"

Bill slowly arose from his bed, and taking his chair from his bed-side joined the group at the table. For some good reason, Bill did not care much for cards; he played more to please Tom than himself.

"We needn't hurry about quittin' to-night, either," said Tom. He was mixing the cards. "Aunt Amy ain't here to rap on the wall just as we get started."

"But we will have to leave at ten," Ned replied. "Father told us to be sure and leave at ten; and then you know we have a long walk."

The boys gathered up their cards, and after arranging them the game commenced—a harmless game of some sort, so long as no harm came from it—and continued nicely. The best and the poorest players were winning—decidedly; so all went well.

After a time the stillness was broken by a cry from Tom. Ned had just taken a trick which he seemed to think he was entitled to.

"That is mine!" he cried. He pointed one finger directly at Ned as he spoke; his eyes were wide open.

"No, Tom," Ned replied softly.

"That is mine!" Tom repeated still pointing his finger at Ned. "I played the king; you the queen."

Ned took the trick and spread it out on the table before all. "But you see, Tom, Bill trumped it."

Tom subsided without a word.

After that the game continued peacefully until Ned, upon examining his watch, said: "We must go; it's after ten."

"Can't you play just another game?" Tom pleaded. "Aunt Amy isn't here to-night." Tom seemed to think that something extra ought to be done because Aunt Amy wasn't home.

"No," Ned answered decidedly. "We must go now or father won't let us come again." He arose

to go and Jim did likewise. Ned tried the door but could not open it.

"How do you open your door?"

"Can't you open a door yet?" Tom replied jokingly. He arose and went to open the door, and finding it fast, said: "There's a catch here on this side; sometimes it slips. That's the trouble." So after slipping the catch he opened the door and Ned walked out.

"Hurry up, Jim," he said, after going outside. But Jim remained standing in the middle of the room looking around with a dazed expression on his face.

"What's the matter with you anyway?" Tom asked quickly.

"I can't find my cap!"

"There it is—over there on my bed. Tom threw it over there."

Jim hurried across the room, and after getting his cap returned and started out of the door. Just then Tom gave him a violent push in the back, which sent the boy hurrying down the stairs as if the house were on fire. "Hurry up and get out of here if you're going to!" he said, as he gave the push. Then, after shutting the door, he returned to his chair.

"You don't treat your company very nice, Tom," said Bill, after he was seated again.

"Well, I asked them to stay and they wouldn't; so if they were goin'—they may as well do it in a hurry. I don't like slow people. Now come, Bill,

we may as well have a little game by ourselves."

"No, Tom! I think we've had enough for to-night. There's no good in overdoing things."

"Please, Bill." Whenever Tom wanted to be especially nice he always said "please."

"No, Tom; I'm tired."

"Let's toss, Bill. I always like to settle things peacefully."

"Well, go ahead."

"Heads or tails, Bill?"

"Tails."

Tom took a coin from his pocket and threw it into the air; it came down—heads up. Tom looked pleased.

"Come on," he said excitedly, drawing his chair closer to the table. "I win."

"I'm cold," Bill said shivering. "If I've got to play, I'm going to put this blanket around me." He went over to Tom's bed and took a loose blanket which was lying across the foot and after reseating himself put it around his shoulders.

"I'm not cold; only my hands," Tom remarked, when Bill was getting the blanket. But Bill apparently did not hear the remark. After he had placed the blanket around his shoulders he again—very reluctantly—drew his chair closer to the table and was ready to accommodate Tom.

"Haven't we got along just fine here together, Bill?" Tom said, as he began shuffling the cards. "Never had a bit of trouble, have we? Been just like two brothers, haven't we, Bill?"

"Yes, Tom; but remember, I'm not going to play later than eleven."

"Just as you say, Bill."

So the game proceeded. Tom was happy because he was again winning; but, as time went on, his luck seemed to change and Bill began to win. Tom didn't like that. Bill continued winning. Tom began to look desperate; his eyes began to show fire; he could scarcely control himself. At last Bill's score went far ahead of Tom's. Tom could stand it no longer. Of course he did not mean what he said, but, nevertheless, he said it:

"You are cheating!"

"I am NOT!"

"You ARE! I'm on to your game; I've been watching you." Tom's temper was rising.

"Now, Tom, look here!" Bill returned passionately. "I know you didn't mean that, Tom, but I won't stand THAT kind of talk." He shook his clenched fist at Tom, and his face, as well, showed that he was in earnest. But Tom, once aroused, was not to be subdued so easily.

"I DID mean it," he snarled, and with that he jumped up and commenced hammering Bill with both fists. His face was the picture of anger. Tom had one of his terrible tantrums.

What could Bill do? He did not want to fight Tom, but he had to defend himself—there was no use being pounded to death; so he did his best to protect himself in the fight which ensued. Indeed he needed to—for Tom was quick and strong and

when he got mad fought just like a little tiger. Desperately they continued punching, clawing, hammering, snarling at one another, until Bill saw his chance and gave Tom a push, which sent him back against the wall, hoping that this would end the fight. But not so with Tom; he regained his equilibrium and was about to make for Bill when he saw out the corners of his eyes, his base-ball bat, standing in the corner of the room; he grabbed it, raised it with both hands and started for Bill. He was fairly crazed with anger. Bill snatched a chair—the most convenient thing—and, raising it, held it up before his head to prevent receiving a blow.

Just at this moment the blanket, which had fallen on the floor when Bill arose from his chair, came into use. Bill tripped over the blanket and fell, taking with him the chair, and Tom—under the chair. They fell on the floor all in a heap—Tom on the bottom, the chair on Tom, and Bill on top of the chair. He jumped up as quickly as possible and removed the chair; but Tom remained on the floor, silent and motionless. Bill stood there looking down at the inert form, wondering if anything had happened; he became white, trembling and frightened when he realized Tom was unconscious.

"I hope I haven't hurt him; it was his own fault, though. He shouldn't have been so quick-tempered," he murmured. He stood there silently a few moments, hoping that Tom would revive; then

he went and poured some water from the pitcher, returned and bathed the unconscious brow, hoping thus to revive him; but still there were no signs of life. After a little, stooping, he lifted Tom from the floor and placed him on the bed.

Not knowing what else to do, he went and sat down on one of the chairs—thinking that in time Tom would revive; he was trembling all over. For a long time he sat and watched his unfortunate companion—it seemed hours—as he lay on the bed with one arm hanging over the side. The silence was unendurable; he could hear his own heart-beat, like a hammer sounding against his chest. He gave a sigh of relief when at last he heard the town clock pealing out the midnight hour. It came like a comforter and gave him courage to arise, walk over to the death-like figure stretched upon the bed, and look for signs of re-awakening. But he was disappointed. Then stooping he looked at Tom closely—he was as white as death; bending still closer over the unconscious boy, he could see a blue mark across the temple; reaching down he drew up the hand that hung over the bed-side—it was cold as ice. At last he placed his head on Tom's chest; he could hear no heart-beat—except his own, which was still hammering against his chest.

He stood up quickly, terrified. His face looked like that of one who had suddenly gone mad. "He's dead!" he choked. "What have I done!"

For a moment he stood motionless, as if petrified. Then when he fully realized the awful

horror of the accident, he turned away from the bed and paced across the room wringing his hands. "What shall I do? What shall I do? I've killed the best friend I had in the world," he sobbed. "I didn't mean to, though; it was Tom's own fault. He would have killed me if I hadn't held that chair before me. If I'd only kept my promise to mother it wouldn't have happened. Oh, why did I do it? Only to please Tom. I didn't want to play. I never cared for those miserable cards."

Then he turned and again looked at the silent figure stretched on the bed. The blanket was at his feet; he stooped, picked it up, went over to the bed and with his trembling fingers covered the body completely. He could not bear to look at it.

"What shall I do?" he again murmured with quivering voice. He was shaking like a leaf in a heavy wind-storm, so that he could hardly keep his feet. He tried to console himself with the thought that he was not to blame. "It wasn't my fault; it's a cruel mistake." After that he dropped into a chair, unable to stand any longer. A few minutes later he said aloud softly: "I can never explain this thing to anybody's satisfaction. If they catch me, they'll surely hang me or imprison me for life; and all for a mistake. But I know that no judge or jury will ever listen to reason; it's their business to hang. I'm not a murderer—so if I can get away up there in the mountains among those big redwood trees, I may be able to



hide so they won't find me. I'm going to try anyhow."

He immediately arose as if there were no time to lose, crossed the room hurriedly, gathered together what of his few belongings he felt that he would most need, and put them in his traveling case. His books he left in their accustomed place on the table; he would never need them again. Even if he escaped, he would always have to live apart from the rest of mankind, he thought, so there was no need to be hampered with books. He took a blanket from his bed; that would be necessary as a protection from the cold. It might be the only warmth he could secure for the cool nights.

After everything was ready, he picked up his traveling-case and slowly moved toward the door. He hated to go in this cowardly fashion, but it was his only salvation; besides, remaining never could bring Tom back to life. Just as he took hold of the knob to open the door, he turned and gave his last look at the silent figure, pitifully sobbing: "Good-bye, poor Tom." After which he opened the door and went out into the dark night—the moonless night; it was like entering a vault of eternal darkness, never again to see the bright sunshine or to be free from sorrow. He was leaving what had been a happy home, and all on account of this cruel mistake of his.

## IV.

## FLIGHT TO THE REDWOODS.

The terrified, heart-broken youth, as he furtively left the house, like a thief in the night, was glad the night was dark; it was all the better to slip away in. Outside the gate he paused as if doubtful which way to turn; sorrowfully he looked up at the blinking stars. There were millions of them; they seemed to feel for him. He could hear the dull croaking of the frogs from the marsh not far away. As he listened the chorus grew louder and louder — almost deafening — then, as one, they ceased. The silence became painful.

Choking a sob he turned toward the west. It would never do to go near the main street; somebody might stop and question him. Selecting one of the darkest of the side-streets, he turned into it and crept softly along, carrying his grip in his right hand. Once a man appearing suddenly from out of the darkness, stopped and looked at him very closely. Could it be that the horrible deed had already been discovered? He began trembling again.

"Got a match, young fellow?" the man asked.

"N-no," was all he could stammer.

The man passed along and Bill felt relieved. He continued his flight; turned and went up the hill past the school-house—the school whose doors he never could enter again. For a moment he paused to look at the dear old school where he had spent so many happy days; after which he hurried on, crossing Mission Street and then up to the higher hills. Here he stopped, put his luggage down and sat upon it to rest before going further. Sorrowfully he looked down at the twinkling lights of the little city that lay peacefully sleeping beneath him—the city that he had learned to love so well in such a short time—looked down upon the “City Beautiful.”

And as Bill sat upon the hillside looking down at the city as it slept; before it the murmuring waters, beyond it the silent mountains, over it the twinkling stars; he gave a deep sigh. “I hate to go away from here; I wanted to stay here always,” he softly murmured. “Oh, if it hadn’t been for this awful mistake of mine!”

After this he arose to go. For a moment longer he paused, and looking down at the lights of the city gently said: “They look like the stars, only upside down.” Then it was hard to tell what they were as his eyes filled with tears and he turned his back upon it—perhaps, forever. Just as he turned to go, he heard the town clock through the stillness again strike: One! Two! “What! is it two already—two hours in coming such a short way?” Three! “No, there’s something wrong.”

Four! and so on, he counted until the clock ceased at twelve, and silence again reigned. "It's only twelve. I thought it was twelve before I left the house. It must have been only eleven that I heard strike before."

"Poor Tom," he sobbed as he again started onward. "If only it hadn't happened. It was his own fault though." This latter seemed to console him as he crossed the hills and entered the forest.

At the edge of the woods he paused beneath a huge outspreading oak, whose lower branches rambled along almost on the ground. Here the tired youth put down his luggage and concluded to rest until dawn; it was too dark to enter the forest such a black night. He took his blanket and wrapping it around himself sat down under the oak, leaning his back against the friendly trunk. For a long time he sat and thought it all over. Would he never stop shaking? Would he be able to escape, or would they at length capture him? Well, anyway he would be free as long as possible; if caught he would be long enough in prison as it was; so a few days in the woods would only help to shorten the time. He was going to escape if he could; it was not his fault; as soon as dawn came he would continue his flight into the woods, where he hoped to hide among the redwood trees.

But it was no use, he could not escape; that would be impossible; he may as well have given himself up in the first place. That very night he was captured; some men followed, and after they

saw him sit down under the tree, advanced upon him. As soon as he saw them he tried to escape; but before he could free himself from the blanket the men had him fast. Three of them held him, while a fourth took a rope which he held in his hand, and, after tying one end to an overhanging branch, proceeded to tie the other end around Bill's neck. This was a cruel thing to do, in a civilized land—and all for a mistake, too. Bill gave one last effort to free himself and—awoke, as he fell over onto the ground. The sun was just rising over the distant hills. He hastened from his blanket and after gathering his things together entered the forest.

The carriage road was just below him, so the nervous, unhappy boy scrambled down through the undergrowth until he reached it. He could make better time walking along the driveway than he could through the bushes; if he heard any one coming it would be easy enough to hide behind the shrubbery, until they had passed. He walked along cautiously, through Sycamore Flat, listening for any sound of pursuers that might come from the rear. The morning was cool; a light mist having come in from the ocean just at sunrise. But Bill did not mind it; it was all the better for walking.

He continued on and on along this road of many curves. It proved a beautiful summer morning; the mist having passed away the warm sunshine flooded the lovely slopes. The trees were

of a soft, delicate green of springtime and the flowers were brilliant and many-colored. The perfume of the sweet azalea filled the air, and the feathery tribe were singing and twittering from the tree-tops. Everything was bright and beautiful. Yet Bill could not see it; all he could do was to think of "poor Tom" and how it all happened, as he trudged along. After a little he paused to rest in a shady nook and took a drink of pure water from a tiny stream that gurgled down the green slope. He had had nothing to eat that morning, but then that did not matter, he was not hungry; he could not have eaten anything if he had it. All he could do was to sigh and think of his awful mistake.

As he continued on his way, after a time he stopped to look at the view that stretched before him. Unhappy as he was he could not fail to see its beauty. On either side the wooded slopes, thick with a growth of trees and shrubs, sloped downward—V-shaped until they almost met at the bottom, leaving room only for the San Lorenzo as it rushed onward, plunging and foaming among the huge boulders. The hill at the right curved in the rear forming the background. On the right, below, half way between the carriage road and the river, was the railroad track, running along a narrow ledge of rock with a steep precipice below and another above. In one place where the ledge was not wide enough for a track, an arch of masonry had been added—it seemed impossible.

It was a beautiful sight, with the warm sunshine falling over it all and the blue sky above.

Toot! toot! The train was coming. Bill watched it as it crept along the narrow ledge. Many of the passengers had their heads out of the window to admire the view.

"They're not getting as fine a view, though, as I am up here," he thought to himself.

Then as he watched the train, it gradually disappeared through a little hole in the side of the mountain.

Honk! honk! Somebody was coming in an automobile. Bill grabbed his belongings from a stump where he had placed them, to rest himself, and climbing the acclivity on the opposite side of the road, hid himself behind a clump of lilac bushes. It was best not to run any chances; it might be the sheriff after him. He lay flat on the ground, face downward, hoping to escape being seen. But, nevertheless, the car stopped directly in front of him. He commenced trembling again; he was as white as death. Yes, they had seen him; it was all over now; he could not look up.

"Oh-h, isn't that bea-u-tiful! The finest piece of scenery I've ever seen!" It was a woman's voice.

"Simply grand!" a gentleman's voice replied.

Bill looked up; he felt relieved. They were, doubtless, a party of tourists going for a mountain ride; perhaps to the Big Trees; or maybe still further into the Big Basin, or some other equally attractive mountain drive. As Bill continued

watching the party, one of the gentlemen stepped out of the car and took a picture with a small kodak. A small boy also jumped out of the car to watch the gentleman take the picture. Then they both entered the car again and soon the party, laughing and talking, rounded the adjacent curve and were out of sight, without having even looked in the direction of the lilac bushes.

After breathing a sigh of relief, the youth descended to the road and continued his course along the mountain road until he came to a place where the road divided; the one at the right going down into the canyon. He examined the sign-board; the upper arm pointed to Felton, Ben Lomond, Brookdale, Boulder Creek and Big Basin; the lower to the Big Tree Grove. Bill chose the latter; he had always wanted to visit the grove, ever since coming to the West, and this may have been his only chance. He walked slowly down the grade until he came to the river, which he crossed over the swinging bridge. This brought him into the grove of redwoods.

Bill was tired after his long walk, and hungry, too, for it was then long after noon and he had had nothing to eat that day. He stepped over to the lunch counter and dropped into a chair. A waiter came to him and took his order of some sandwiches and coffee. After having disposed of this light repast and having sufficiently rested, he arose and went toward the gate of admittance to the grove where the giant redwoods grow.



It was twenty-five cents admission fee. Bill had not much money left, but then, doubtless he would be taken anyhow, within a few days; so he thought he may as well spend what little he had left, while he had the chance. So he entered the gate.

## V.

## AT THE SANTA CRUZ BIG TREE GROVE.

In a grove six miles from the city of Santa Cruz stand the largest of the California redwoods (*sequoia sempervirens*) like Titans of old—the monarchs of all living things. The huge trunks protected by red, fibrous bark, rise, with but little taper, to a wonderful height; and far above the spreading branches gracefully droop with their evergreen foliage. At their feet grow smaller trees and shrubs. In the springtime this wonderful grove is carpeted with a host of woodland flowers, peeping up from among their green leaves. The pink oxalis, the yellow violet, the dainty wake-robin, the wild strawberry blossom, the cream-colored Solomon's-seal with bowed heads, the odd-looking trillium and the blue hound's-tongue on long, spiky stems, abound plentifully.

The largest of this group of redwoods—the Giant—is twenty-one feet in diameter and three hundred and six feet in height. The lowest branches are over one hundred feet from the ground; and the age is estimated, by some, to be in the neighborhood of five thousand years.

Among the largest are: Jumbo, with its ele-

phant's head growing on one side; General Grant, General Sherman and Colonel Roosevelt. General Fremont has a cavity in which, tradition tells, General Fremont camped during the year 1846 with his Pathfinders. This cavity is capable of holding, comfortably, fifty people at a given time. During the visit of the Atlantic fleet at Santa Cruz on its tour around the world in 1908, seventy-five sailor lads squeezed themselves into this hollow. Ingersoll's Cathedral is a group of nine separate, good-sized trees and nine smaller ones growing from one root. It is one of the finest specimens in the grove.

There are hundreds of others, too numerous to mention individually; but all majestic and wonderful as they tower their massive bulk and height skyward, above insignificant man.

This is a place where a lover of Nature can well afford to pass away the drowsy summer days; or where, even in the winter time, often the shadows are not unwelcome, as he wanders about inspired by the might of our Creator's handiwork; first wondering at the marvelous bulk; then raising his head to gaze at the wonderful height with the drooping, evergreen branches far above. This gigantic grove is the picnicker's delight, the tourist's Mecca, the poet's inspiration, the artist's elysium, the pride of every Californian's heart. It is a place, indeed, where a visitor of romantic mood might sit and dream until his fancy sees the fair Rosalind, in masculine attire, walking among the

trees, reading the sonnets of her unknown lover as she advances, crushing the violets under her dainty feet; or wonder why some modern Robin Hood has never come in such a place to blow his hunting horn.

Our fugitive, having paid his entrance fee, wandered about among these ancient trees and wondered at their greatness, as many another had done in the days gone by and as others will do in the ages to come. After he was satisfied, he strolled back toward the gate and sat down by one of the trees to rest. Meanwhile several other parties had entered the grove and were viewing the giants just as he had done.

Honk! honk! He could hear the sound of an automobile in the outer grove. He jumped up and concealed himself behind the tree; wondering who could be coming. Another party soon entered the gate, which the youth recognized as the same people who had passed him in the morning.

The first to enter was a stout, elderly lady with gray hair—a very important-appearing person—and a young girl of perhaps eighteen years, doubtless mother and daughter. Both ladies wore green automobile veils. Bill wondered why they both wore the same color; but concluded that it must be the style, so of course both would have to have it. A small boy of eight or nine years crowded between them just as they were entering, and ran on ahead. An elderly gentleman with gray whiskers followed them. Last came a couple—a delicate-

looking woman, who walked with the aid of a cane in her right hand; and a dark-complexioned, middle-aged man, with a kodak strapped over his shoulder, who supported the woman by her left arm.

After the party had all entered, one of the guides stepped up to them and after the usual preliminaries offered to show them the Wonders of the West.

"These certainly are magnificent, too," said the elderly lady, as she walked toward General Fremont to inspect the forestal wonder.

"I wonder if they are as large as the ones we saw in the Big Basin," exclaimed the young girl curiously.

"I hardly think so," the elderly gentleman replied, as the party advanced toward General Fremont.

"Oh, yes," the guide edged in quickly upon hearing the remark. "We have the largest here. I have taken careful measurements both places, so I know; but in the Basin there are larger numbers."

"But the man at the Big Basin told us that those were the largest," the girl added.

"Oh, of course," the guide returned, with an amused smile as if it were absurd for anybody to give such false information, "he would be sure to tell you that; but it is not so."

"Well, no matter," said the elderly gentleman, "they are all very fine; for my part I can't see

any difference. They certainly are the finest trees I have ever seen. Fancy one of these in Pittsburg."

"Come in here!" excitedly called the elderly lady from the depths of the tree, where she had preceded the remainder of the party. "See how much room is inside this tree! Would you believe it!"

"Yes," replied the guide. "Fifty people can comfortably enter this tree at the same time."

So the entire party disappeared into the cavity of the tree. Bill watched them as they went, from his seat by the tree, which he had resumed after finding out who the party were. After a little they all came out again and continued their tour of inspection through the grove. After a little the sight-seers, having completed their tour, returned in the direction of the gate. Bill could again hear their conversation.

"Are we ready to go now?" asked the elderly lady.

"Yes, I am ready," the man of the kodak promptly replied. "I would like to get down to the beach and take a dip in the surf before we have to go on; it is so nice and warm to-day, I know I would enjoy it."

"Come, Alice, we are going now!" the mother called to the daughter, who was a short space apart from the party, diligently examining one of the trees.

"But, mother!" disappointedly exclaimed the

girl as she joined the group. "Haven't we time to measure the Giant? The man who drove the car said that it took thirteen people with outstretched arms to encircle the tree. I should like to see if it is correct."

"But we haven't thirteen, Alice. So it will not be possible."

"There are some people over there. I'll ask them if they'll join us. There are eight of us including the guide and driver—I'll ask them to join us. There are five in that group over there; that will just make the number."

"Well, ask them if you wish; but hurry, for we haven't much time. Uncle George wants to take a swim in the surf when we get back to Santa Cruz."

Accordingly, Alice excitedly ran over to the other party of tourists—two men and three ladies—and asked them to join the circle, which they seemed willing to do. Then she also asked the driver of the car if he would assist, which he assented to do.

"Have you enjoyed your outing, Ella?" the elderly lady asked of the delicate-looking one.

"I certainly have," was the cheerful reply. "I think I could soon regain my health if I could stay in these mountains awhile. The air is so invigorating here."

"It does seem as if we had no time to see a place after we get there," the younger gentleman added. "We could easily spend a week here, be-

tween the mountains and the sea-shore, if we were not in such a hurry to get home."

"But we have been four months from home now," added the elderly lady. "Longer than we intended. We must hurry home and get ready for our European trip this fall."

"Come, mother!" Alice called to the group from the vicinity of the Giant. "We're all ready."

So the party joined the strangers, who were already assembled about the tree, and began joining hands as they encircled the tree.

"Ronald isn't here, father. What has become of him?" Alice asked wonderingly. "He was with you when I left."

"I don't know," he replied, looking around for the missing lad. "Perhaps twelve will do," indifferently.

"No, father, we **MUST** have thirteen," she said, also looking around. "There is somebody over there. Would you mind joining us?" she smiled pleasantly, as she asked the favor of the thirteenth person.

It was Bill; he did not mind; so he jumped up and hurried over to the circle, where he soon found himself joining hands with Alice on his right and her father on his left. Finding the measurement to be correct the party dispersed, to form another circle in the open space before the tree, to show the circumference. Then Uncle George took a picture of the human circle with the Giant in the background. After this the party disjoined hands.



"Think of it, father!" Alice whispered. "There are just thirteen! One of us will surely die soon."

At that moment Bill could feel a rope tightening around his neck. Yes, he had been the thirteenth.

"Perhaps," the girl continued softly, "it will be Aunt Ella."

"Hush!" the father cautioned. "She may hear you."

Anyway these latter words came like balm to Bill's trembling nerves. "Perhaps it would be Aunt Ella," he thought. HE was not ready to die yet.

For a few minutes the party stood talking with the strangers.

"Aren't these trees wonderful?" Alice's mother began in her usual important manner. "I shall never forget this day's outing as long as I live. We have had a long ride over the mountains into the Big Basin. Oh, it is such a treat! We are from Pittsburg, you know, and we don't see things like this every day."

"Yes, it certainly is a beautiful locality," replied one of the ladies pleasantly. "How the people who live here must enjoy these beautiful things! Even in the winter these places are seldom inaccessible."

"What part of the country are you from?" asked Uncle George.

"We three are from Gainsville, Georgia," the same lady replied. "This other lady and gentleman are from Scotland. I presume people come

from all over the world to see these giant redwoods."

"We are very much charmed with Santa Cruz and its beautiful environs," the lady from Scotland uttered with a strong Scotch accent. "It certainly is the garden spot of California. The roses at the hotel where we are stopping are the finest we have seen anywhere in California. We are thinking of locating here."

"Well, we must go now," said Alice's mother. "Many thanks for your assistance," she added smiling, as she turned away and followed the rest of the party who had preceded her. "Are we ready to go now?" she asked upon reaching the group. "Where is Ronald? Ronald! Where are you?" The party looked around the grove eagerly, wondering where the missing boy could be.

"Here, mother! Over here playing with the puppies." The lad came running toward the group from the direction of the cabins. "Mother, they are the dearest little puppies," he cried candidly. "The man wants to sell them. Can't I buy one?"

"Nonsense, Ronald! You already have three dogs at home."

"Oh, ma-ma," with the usual whine of the disappointed boy.

"No, Ronald! Impossible!" the mother replied decidedly. "Think of the trouble we would have at the hotels—encumbered with a puppy."

So the boy gave up hope, with eyes filled with tears, and the party advanced toward the exit,

Bill stood near the gate and watched them as they departed. Alice was the last to go out, and smilingly bowed toward Bill.

"Thank you very much," she called thoughtfully.

Bill lifted his cap in acknowledgment. Thus the party disappeared from his vision. A few minutes later he heard the honk! honk! of the car as it went up the hill on the opposite side of the river.

Then Bill, himself, after a parting look at the giant sequoias returned to the outer grove. Not knowing what else to do he wandered toward the river and sat down by the water's edge, upon the trunk of a fallen alder in the shade of a willow copse.

It was one of those perfect days, that make Santa Cruz summers seem so heavenly—not too warm, not too cool. The light fog of the early morning had tempered the air so that it was just comfortable. There among the trees and shrubbery with the birds singing, the flowers blooming, the clear water of the river moving silently along, and the deep blue sky above, it certainly was beautiful.

But heavenly as it was, Bill could not see it, as he sat there sadly gazing into the quiet water; all he could do was to think of "poor Tom" and how it had all happened. He thought of how together they had prepared supper—only the evening before—it seemed years; and how they had enjoyed eating it. Then he thought of how harshly he had spoken to Tom about his helplessness and wished

he had not spoken so; also of the game, and his promise to his dead mother; then how the other boys came and went. Oh, if he had only stopped when the other boys, as he wanted to do—all would have gone well. At last he thought of the terrible result and how he had left Tom there alone and fled into the dark night. It made him shudder. He wondered if "it" had been discovered yet. What if Aunt Amy had come home and found her dear boy lying there dead! Would not it be terrible for her? He certainly was heart-broken at the thoughts of it all.

"I can't help it!" he finally sobbed, with tears rolling down his cheeks. "It wasn't my fault; it was only a mistake. I've always done the best I could for myself, and nobody's ever helped me either—except mother; and now I'm not goin' to worry about this thing any longer. I'm just goin' to get along the best I can by myself—if I don't get caught."

After this he stood up for a few moments as if ready to go. He looked at the sun; it was nearing its rest. Then he stooped down and after washing his hands and face in the cool water arose and slowly returned to the grove, feeling much better after his declaration.

That night, after taking a light repast at the grove, he obtained permission from one of the keepers to sleep in a deserted hut at the edge of the grove. And he did sleep, too—the sleep of the just—for he had walked a long way during the day, and his rest of the night before was only brief, and troubled.

## VI.

## CONVERSATION AMONG SOME LOGANBERRIES

When Bill awoke the next morning, the first thing he did was to look up through the outspreading branches of the tall trees at the sun; it was well advanced upon its dayward journey. It was a beautiful morning, free from mists, and the birds were singing merrily in bush and tree. His first thought was of "poor Tom."

"Shall I never get over thinking about him? It makes me feel awful," he muttered lugubriously, as he came out of the cabin and walked down toward the stream. Here he refreshed himself by washing in the cool waters of the San Lorenzo, and then went over to the lunch counter to get something to eat, before continuing his journey. The unfortunate youth felt it was not safe to remain near a place where so many people were coming and going; most any of his friends might happen along and accuse him of base murder, for such it surely was, although it was a mistake on his part.

After sitting down at the table, he ordered some coffee and rolls, of the waiter who attended him;

and also some sandwiches which he intended taking along to eat later in the day.

Bill had about disposed of his breakfast; he was just taking his last swallow of coffee, when a man entered the grove riding in a small cart drawn by a horse.

"Oh, Charlie!" the newcomer called, to the man who had served Bill and was then sweeping the porch of his dwelling-house. "Did you hear about the murder?"

Just as he spoke there was a noise sounded out through the grove like the falling of a cup upon a saucer; and the young man who sat at the table began shaking and growing pale. His head dropped toward his chest.

"I am caught," were his thoughts.

"No! What was it?" Charlie asked, excitedly. He stopped sweeping, and paused to hear about the trouble.

"Two men got into a quarrel over a game of cards. One called the other a cheat—or something or other—and a fight ensued; one man was killed," the occupant of the cart quickly replied. "The man was found dead, lying on his bed, by a neighbor."

"Did they get the murderer?" Charlie asked, eagerly.

"Yes; he's safely landed in jail," the other added, with a toss of his head. "Well, I hope he gets what he deserves—whatever that may be."

At this last, the young man of the fallen coffee

cup began to revive. He breathed a sigh of relief. There was hope yet. It was not him they were talking about.

"Where did it happen?" Charlie further inquired.

"Somewhere near Aptos. At first the man escaped, and tried to avoid capture by hiding among the hills! but they soon caught him. I tell you, that kind can't escape; they're bound to be caught, sooner or later."

Bill shivered, but hoped it would be "later" in his case. He lifted the cup to its proper position. Meanwhile, he could not help but feel sorry for the prisoner, whoever he was. "Perhaps he didn't mean to do it; it might have been a mistake of some sort," he thought, as he rose from the table; also thinking that he had better get away as quickly as possible. No telling what might happen if he stayed around there. It was best to get higher into the mountains.

So, after paying for his purchase, he hurried away to the cabin, and quickly gathered his possessions together. Everything went into his traveling-case except the blanket; this he wrapped around it, and then tied the rope, which he begged of Charlie, around all. After finding a suitable stick, he shoved one end under the rope, and then raised it to his shoulder. Thus he was ready to start, tramp fashion.

"Perhaps people will take me for a tramp; but, then, better that than a murderer," he thought, as

he started from the grove and re-crossed the swinging-bridge.

Thus he ascended the hill until the main road was reached again. Turning into it, the youth walked for some distance until he came to an open space among the hills. Ahead of him, toward the left, he could see the houses of Felton. He paused. Directly in front, by the roadside, was a dilapidated picket-fence; in many instances the pickets were missing. Beyond the fence, running parallel with it, were six or eight rows of berry-vines, growing on trellises about four feet high; further over, Bill could see cabbage plants, lettuce, peas, beans and other things growing in rows—evidently somebody's vegetable garden. Far in the distance, almost hidden among the trees and shrubbery, he could see a modest little home.

But it was the berries that took Bill's eye; great monsters, hanging on the vines by the thousands. Surely nobody would object if he crawled through the fence, and helped himself to a few of the luscious berries. There were such quantities of them that what few he would eat could never be missed, and the house was so hidden that no one would be apt to see him.

Accordingly, he lowered his baggage from his shoulders to the green grass by the roadside, and crawled through the fence in one of the places where the pickets were missing, and then, after standing erect, began to pluck the berries.

He was just going to place the first berry in his



mouth, when suddenly he was startled by a head and shoulders rising from behind the bushes on the opposite side. It was a young girl of perhaps fifteen summers, wearing a blue gingham and a sun-bonnet.

"Get out of there! Get right out, I say! I'll have no tramps coming around here," came from the sun-bonnet, very decidedly. "Oh-h, but you frightened me, so!"

Bill stumbled backward in amazement; he was about to leave. Then he spoke—thinking it better to apologize.

"Excuse me! but I'm not a tramp. I just slipped in, thinking there'd be no harm if I helped myself to a few berries. I'll go right out, though."

"No, don't go!" was the quick reply. "If you're not a tramp you may remain as long as you like and eat as many berries as you wish; there are plenty here. Now that I look at you more closely, though, I see you're not a tramp. When I saw you coming down the road with something over your back, I thought, of course, it must be a tramp; so I just crouched down behind the vines, hoping you'd pass without seeing me. I don't like tramps."

Accordingly, Bill commenced eating the delicious, dark-brown berries, and the girl resumed her picking into a basket which she had been filling.

"Aren't they nice, though?" he approved. "Are these Loganberries?"

"Yes; they are Loganberries. They were propa-

gated here in Santa Cruz, some years ago, by Judge Logan; they are a cross between the red raspberry and the wild blackberry—so father has told me,” the girl explained kindly. “Just look at the size of this one, will you?” At this she held up a large berry, perhaps an inch and a half in length, for the newcomer’s inspection, but just as he raised his eyes to look at it—it disappeared somewhere in the sun-bonnet.

“I always eat the biggest,” she added.

“Why so? Ain’t the little ones just as good?”

“Well, you see, it’s just this way: I only allow myself to eat a dozen in a day, so if I eat the largest I get more. This last one was thirteen for to-day though; I’d forgot. I’d already eaten my dozen. What is your name?”

“My name is Bill,” he replied, thinking that would be enough.

“Mine’s Jessie. We’re Scotch; at least father is; mother was, but she’s dead now,” she added sadly. “I, of course, am nothing.”

Bill thought that was a strange remark; but in reply said: “My mother was Scotch also.”

“And your father?”

“Father was an American.”

“Then YOU are an American. But I am nothing,” she again said queerly.

“But why do you say you are nothing? Aren’t you Scotch, too?”

“How can I be Scotch when I’m born in America?”

"Then you are an American."

"How can I be an American when my parents are Scotch?"

"Well, that's a question I never have been able to solve, myself. I've often wondered about it though."

"Women have no rights in this country anyhow; at least not until they're married," Jessie further added, and at the same time unconsciously placing number fourteen in her mouth.

"But why not until they're married?" Bill asked curiously, as he watched the girl's fingers flying as fast as her tongue, while she plucked the berries and dropped them into her basket; also thinking to himself that he had often heard to the contrary; but maybe that was from married women.

"Well, you see, as I understand the laws of this country—if I should marry an American, I would become an American; then I would be 'somebody'; but if I should marry a Scotchman then I never could be anything, because I never could be Scotch since I'm born in America. Do you see?" At least the girl had her own ideas on the subject, whether they were correct or not.

"I'm afraid I can't explain those things to you," Bill replied. "There are some queer combinations in this world." He had ceased eating the Loganberries, having disposed of all he cared for, and was about to depart, when Jessie continued:

"Anyway I shall never marry a Scotchman."

"Why not?"

"Because we have enough of them in the family already. I'll never marry though; so it's no use to worry."

"Why not?"

"Because I have enough to do to take care of my sister's children," was the prompt reply.

"If you don't marry you'll never be anybody," he added playfully.

"Yes—I—will!" she said emphatically.

"What will you be if you never marry?" he inquired wonderingly.

"An old maid!" Jessie was a girl never to be outdone by anyone.

In spite of himself Bill could not help but smile at her remark.

"Now I must be going along," said he, feeling that it would be better to get to the protecting bushes and trees, where he would feel safer. "I'm sorry I frightened you."

"Oh, you didn't frighten me! Not after I knew you weren't a tramp. There's only two things that ever scare ME; I mean it, too; and I'll stick to it, till the very last. You'll see, nothing else will ever frighten me."

"What are the two things?"

"Tramps and murderers!" in her most powerful tone.

"Murderers!" Bill gasped as he staggered backwards. What could this young miss know about

murderers! Was every one he met to shout that word in his ears?

"Well, you see," she went on, "it's just this way: When I was a little girl, up on the mountain where I live, one of the men who worked for father killed his wife and another man, and I don't know how many more, in one of the cabins. He threatened to kill father, too, and all the rest of us. My, but I was scared! I was sick for a long time afterward; and then for years I couldn't go past the cabin without shivering. The murderer escaped for a few days and hid in the bushes; but finally they caught him and hung him to one of the trees. Father tried to stop them, but they wouldn't stop. I'm glad they caught him; they always catch 'em sooner or later though! They can't escape!"

This made Bill wince. He hated to hear of such things. He supposed it would be the same with him; they would surely capture him. But he was going to escape if he could. He tried to turn the conversation by asking her if she was not afraid of thieves.

"Not a bit of it!" she replied bravely. "Why, once when I was a little girl about eight years old, I was visiting some friends in San Jose. One night we heard a thief downstairs; everybody was afraid but me. I just walked right out of the door to the head of the stairs. The thief was just starting to come up the stairs, when I said—lively, too: 'You just get right out of here! Do

you hear? Get right out!' And I tell you he GOT!"

Bill did not wonder that the man "got." "You must be very brave to do such a thing as that," he ventured.

"Well, what's there to be afraid of with a thief? You know what he wants; he wants to steal. If you've nothing for him to steal, that settles it. But with a tramp it's different. You don't know what he'll do. He may murder you or he may walk peacefully by. It's the uncertainty of things that gets away with me.

"But murderers!" she continued emphatically. "Just point to a man and say to me: 'That man's a murderer,' and I would start to run, and run—well, I'd just run till I dropped."

Bill could have done this very easily. Under some circumstances it would have been great fun to see her scampering down the road; but what was the use of making the girl chase her legs off? Besides it was best not to point at any murderer, so he merely said:

"But suppose the murderer would start after you?"

"That wouldn't make a bit of difference; once I got started, no power on earth could overtake me."

"I must go now," Bill broke forth, turning towards the fence. He was anxious to be on his way.

"Don't hurry! Wait till I finish my basket;

then I shall have to go myself. I can pick faster if I have some one to talk to."

"Well, I'll help you. I may as well be working as standing here idle. Besides I like to pick them." Accordingly, Bill went round to the other side of the vines, so he would be nearer the basket, and commenced helping Jessie to finish the basket, which yet lacked considerable of being filled. "What are you going to do with them?"

"I and my sister, who lives over in that house," Jessie pointed toward the house among the trees as she spoke, "are going to preserve them. They make the finest kind of jam and jelly to use in the winter time. Then I shall take part of them home with me when father comes for me." After this the girl placed another berry in her mouth.

"Ain't you eating more than your allowance?" Bill asked smilingly.

"I don't suppose one extra will hurt me," she returned softly. But Bill knew of more than one extra that she had disposed of.

"So you don't live here then?"

"Oh, no, I could never live in such a place as this, long. I live up on the top of the mountain. That's the place to 'live.' When I'm here my sister wants me to do all the work and take care of the children besides, while she rests. Now I think people ought to take care of their own children. I don't mind doing my own work at home, where I can have my own way, but I don't

like to do other people's. It's always the way though; those that WILL do are always having everything shoved onto their shoulders."

"You're right enough about that!" Bill answered decidedly. "Why do you come, if she treats you that way?"

"For one reason! Father wants me to. Bertha gets lonely spells, and the blues, and I don't know how many other things; father just insists that I come down for a while and cheer her up. You see my brother-in-law is a traveling man and he's gone sometimes for several weeks at a stretch. Then Bertha gets lonely when she's left alone. I don't see what people want to get lonely for in a beautiful world like this."

The basket was about full; Bill stopped picking and started toward the fence. "Now I must go," he said. "Thank you for the berries."

"Oh, you needn't thank me! They don't belong to me. I just come here and get what I like. They belong to an old man who lives in that house over there." The girl pointed to a house a little distance off from the other side of the road. She had also stopped picking. "He told Sister she could have all she wanted."

Bill crawled through the fence.

"Where are you going?" Jessie inquired inquisitively.

"Somewhere up in the mountains, where I can get work for the summer."

"I'm afraid I can't offer you anything. If it



was a little later in the season father could give you work picking grapes, but not for a long time yet."

"Thank you just the same; I'll find something. Good-bye." He had already shouldered his luggage and thus started down the road.

"Good-bye!" Jessie called out kindly. "You do look like a tramp now!"

After continuing a piece along the road, he came to a turn. Looking back he could see Jessie going toward the house. Just then she, herself, turned and seeing him looking backward waved her hand. After returning her farewell, he again proceeded upon his way, thinking of the pleasant little chat he had with the mountain girl.

Just then a long freight-train came winding down from the high mountains with car after car of redwood lumber, the sight of which put an idea into his head. He would follow the railroad track instead of the wagon road; and thus perhaps reach a lumber-mill where he, doubtless, could obtain work.

## VII.

## A REDWOOD SAWMILL

Down deep in the very bottom of the Basin, beside the laughing, sparkling water of the mountain stream, shaded by the stately majestic redwoods, stood the busy little mill. As Bill trudged down the steep, dusty road, weary and foot-sore, before coming to the bottom, he could look down and see the mill, and the mill-men hurrying to and fro, in and out, busy as the bees about a hive; and hear the continuous hum as the great saws converted the redwoods into building material.

As he approached he could see the men upon the opposite slope felling the trees, while others were engaged in hauling the logs down to the mill-pond. Arriving at the mill he soon became fascinated at the sight of the mill-men dexterously manipulating the huge logs from the mill-pond into the mill, where the keen saws converted them into lumber, after which the lumber was carried along to the rear, where it was placed on flat cars, and then by means of an iron cable was drawn up the opposite hillside, from the one the youth descended; and there it was transferred to the cars of the main railroad and shipped away to the cities for building purposes.

For a long time Bill idly strolled around and watched the mill-hands at their work; presently he concluded that he would ask for a job and if he could get it would make his home there—for a time at least. It was as good a place as any to hide. So bravely, unhesitatingly, he walked up to one of the men and asked for the foreman.

"That's him over there by that pile of lumber," was the gruff response. "Mr. Bradley's his name."

Bill looked and saw a tall, thin, morose-looking man with heavy mustache superintending the removal of some lumber. He walked over toward Mr. Bradley and spoke:

"Do I understand that you are the foreman here?"

"Yes," the man said, turning to look at the speaker.

"Are you in need of any extra mill-men? I am very anxious to get work during my vacation," Bill said in a complacent manner.

"Where are you from?" the foreman inquired severely.

"Santa Cruz."

"Are you used to work?" further questioned Mr. Bradley softening.

"Oh, yes," he replied eagerly. "I've always had to work, ever since I can remember."

"Well, you look as if you might be a worker—if you have a mind to. How old are you?"

"I'm just eighteen this month."

"Yes, I need another hand to help with the loading," Mr. Bradley replied with satisfaction, after thinking a moment.

At length it was arranged that Bill would commence his duties at the mill the following morning, at a satisfactory compensation.

Just then the whistle blew for the noon-hour and the men quit their work.

"Can I get my meals here? And where shall I sleep?"

"Over there; that building is the cook-house; you will get your meals there." Mr. Bradley pointed to a small, square building built of rough redwood lumber, that stood on the sunny slope in the shadow of some trees. "Just beyond are the cabins where the men sleep."

Bill could see half a dozen small cabins similar to the ones he had seen further up the hill, only these were in better condition.

Mr. Bradley paused a moment and looked thoughtful, then he spoke slowly: "I'm not sure whether you can have a cabin to yourself or not; they are all fitted with bunks for two. Now I know of one which has but one occupant; you can go in with him, or, if you'd rather have one to yourself, there are some old cabins upon the other side of the hill. Casey, one of my men, occupies one of them; the rest are empty; if you prefer you may take one of those."

"I believe I would." He feared that he might

talk in his sleep and if so it would be better to be alone.

"We formerly used those cabins," Mr. Bradley went on, "but it was too shady on that side of the hill and they were right under the trees also; so we had some new ones built on the sunny side of the hill. Now that summer is here, the old ones will not be so bad; and you will have Casey for company. Come now and we will have dinner."

Together the two men walked toward the cook-house where Bill soon found himself among the work-men, busily appeasing his keen appetite brought on by his long morning walk. The noon-day meal over, the men returned to their work and Bill walked over to the creek and there in a shady place he sat down upon a moss-grown rock and watched the ever-moving water forcing its course among the boulders. The sound came like music to the boy's ears—the music of the forest.

Later in the afternoon, Bill took his duds and ascended the hill to the place where the two roads met. Here he descended the foot-path which he had noticed in the morning, just before a rock he had sat upon. Continuing down the path, often the ferns and woody plants, which grew by the path-side, would brush against his lower limbs on account of the narrowness of the trail. He crossed the little rustic bridge which spanned the tiny stream he could easily have jumped across, and advanced on the path up the opposite acclivity,

gently rising, parallel with the stream, until he reached the four cabins surrounded by good-sized redwood trees.

For a moment the youth stopped before the cabins and disapprovingly examined their exterior. They were built alike—or nearly so—of rough redwood board and batting and were unpainted. The shingle roofs were sadly the worse for age; in many cases shingles had become loosened and had fallen, leaving the sheeting exposed in many places. Each cabin had in the front a door on right-hand side with three steps ascending to it, and a small six-paned window on the left side. Many of the panes were either partly broken or had entirely disappeared.

The second cabin had the appearance of being the best preserved. Bill tried the door; it was fastened. Obviously this was the one occupied by Casey. He tried the door of the third cabin; it opened. Thus Bill entered. The interior was divided, forming two compartments; the first contained at one side, two bunks with their heads together, or their feet, according as one chose. The remains of a wooden bench stood by one of the bunks and a small cracked mirror hung on the wall. Otherwise the room was bare. Bill opened the door communicating with the rear compartment; it was empty; it had evidently been built for cooking purposes, as the relics of a stove-pipe hung from a hole in the ceiling. Another door gave egress at the rear of the cabin.

Bill opened it and looked up the shady ascent at the ferns and huckleberry foliage with their bright, shiny leaves, that covered the slope.

After examining the first and fourth cabins, Bill returned to the third. It suited him best because a key which he found on the floor would lock the rear door. The front he planned upon nailing up after he procured a hammer and some nails from the mill.

The next thing he did was to gather some fallen redwood leaves, which he scraped up into his blanket, then took and emptied them in the bunk which he had selected for his bed. These he thought would be softer than sleeping on the hard boards. Later in the day, after he had gone to the mill for his evening meal, he returned bringing with him a sack which he filled with leaves for a pillow and also the hammer and nails. By nailing the door he would feel that his effects would be safe from any prowlers that might happen along during his absence. When everything was arranged to the best advantage, Bill sat down on the broken bench.

It was a crude home, there among the redwoods—a dreary, lonely, silent—save for the low murmur of the ever-falling water in the brook—and heart-broken home; but such as it was it was far better than spending a life behind prison bars. The first night was a desolate, heart-rending one for the unfortunate boy, haunted by silence. He was restless and could not sleep; the sinister

thoughts of his awful mistake rang in his ears. Again he would think back to what seemed centuries ago, of the happy home far, far away, and the dear mother, whom he missed so greatly. At last he fell into a troubled sleep.

The next morning, after dressing he hurried down to the mill and after eating a hearty breakfast and cheered by the beautiful June sunshine and the cool, fresh mountain air, commenced his duties at the mill, helping load the lumber onto the cars, as he was assigned to do, and then watching them as they ascended the steep grade drawn by the iron cable.

And so there he worked, day by day, hard as it was, for it made his back ache and his hands filled with slivers, but he did not complain; he always felt better when he was working hardest; it made him forget. Besides he felt so secure; surely no one would ever think of looking in such a place for him. Sometimes he would even think it beautiful, with the green trees rising tier upon tier on the slopes, like an army marching up the hillsides, and the odor of the freshly-sawed lumber ever striking his nostrils.

It was true that many of the mill-men worked with lighter hearts or brighter faces, but none worked with more determination and well-meaning than Bill. It was exasperating, too, for his help-mate was a surly old fellow, hard to please and uncommunicative. Whatever Bill did, was done



wrong, according to his estimation and brought forth a snarling, unkind remark.

One day Mr. Bradley and Casey were engaged in conversation, just a little apart from where Bill and his partner were busily engaged loading a car.

"That young fellow appears to be a lively worker; but he seems to be worried about something," Mr. Bradley said wonderingly. "Like as not it's to do with some girl. I remember when I was that age, I used to be troubled in the same way. He'll get over it, the next nice-looking girl that happens along."

But Casey only solemnly replied: "I dunno. You can't always tell."

Casey was an old bachelor.

The only friend Bill managed to make was a young man a few years his senior, by name Henry West, a young Californian of clean habits. The majority of the mill-men were of a foreign cast. West was one of the engineers who had charge of the cable system. They would often spend their evenings together talking, or walking over one of the many mountain trails.

One Sunday they had arranged to go trout fishing together. Upon their return home after a plentiful catch Henry said to Bill:

"Would you like to go to Santa Cruz next Saturday for the opening of the Casino for the summer season? It's always a grand affair. We can go down on the evening train and then return on Sunday."

Bill was silent for a moment. It would never do for him to show his face in Santa Cruz again, and yet he did not know how to get out of it.

"Will you go?" West asked again, wondering at Bill's reticence.

"I—I don't believe I care to," he finally stammered. "I—I much rather stay here and go fishing."

"Oh, come ahead; we'll have a swell time."

"Well, I'll see. I'll make up my mind in a few days and let you know." Bill thought to put his friend off a few days, which would give him a chance to think of some satisfactory excuse for remaining away, and yet not to offend Henry.

But a fortunate thing happened a few days later—for Bill, at least. Henry West received a telegram that his father was very ill in Sacramento and for him to hasten to his bed-side. Henry left early Thursday morning; this relieved Bill's anxiety.

On Saturday evening just as Bill was returning from work to his cabin, he saw a young girl, carrying a large bunch of flowers, coming toward him along the road upon which he had walked from Santa Cruz. He was just turning from the road to go down the path into the ravine when she called to him pleasantly.

"Hello!"

He considered her rather forward, but thinking perhaps it might be the custom of the mountains to exchange greetings with strangers, he courte-

ously bowed and lifted his cap. Thus he continued down the path to his lonely cabin.

"Why, don't you know me?" the girl called with astonishment.

Bill stopped and turned.

"Don't you remember Jessie? I'm Jessie."

Bill scrambled back to the road with a glad smile spreading on his face. "Why, so it is! I'm glad to see you again. You had a sun-bonnet on the other time I saw you, so I couldn't see your face very well. Then you had a blue dress on that day and to-day you have a brown one." The two shook hands.

"I've been wondering what became of you," Jessie replied complaisantly. "Are you working at the mill?"

"Yes. How do you happen to be up here?" he inquired wonderingly.

"How do I happen to be up here?" she repeated with amusement. "Because I live up here; because I was born and raised up here. That's how I happen to be up here." She laughed. "Do you see that white house up on the hill? That's where I live. I hope you're not staying in those horrid old cabins." Jessie had concluded from seeing him start down the path into the ravine that he must be living in the desolate cabins.

"Yes," he replied, "I am. There was no room in the better cabins for me unless I went in with some one else, and I preferred to come here rather than associate with a stranger."

"We have some better ones than these; perhaps father will let you have one, if you don't mind walking up the hill."

"I should like it very much if he would," he responded eagerly. "It's lonely down in here at night, and besides Casey, my only companion, tells me that he is going away in a few days. Then I would be alone; I hate the thoughts of it. So if your father will let me come up there I'll feel very thankful."

"Well, I'll ask him," Jessie added kindly. She felt sorry for this unfortunate boy who had no home. "I know he will."

"When did you get home?" he asked.

"Two days ago. I stayed longer than I expected; sister was sick and wouldn't let me come away any sooner. I'm glad to get home though; I feel safer here than down there where sister lives."

"Why so?"

"Well, there ain't so much danger of tramps up here."

"Don't tramps ever bother you up there?"

"Don't you worry about a tramp ever walking up a hill like this one. Sometimes they come this far, but they don't like to go any further. There's only one thing that would ever take a tramp up this hill. I've dreaded it all my life."

"What's that?"

"Why, if he was starving to death and there was no other house in sight, he'd come up."

"You've got some pretty flowers. What are they?"

"They are wild iris; it's getting late for them now, but I can always find them if anybody can."

Jessie held the flowers upright for admiration. "I must hurry home now and help granny get supper. You must come up and see us."

"All right. I'll come up to-morrow. I have nothing to do on Sunday."

Jessie started up the steep hill. "Good-bye," she said. "Come to-morrow and stay to dinner."

"Good-bye," Bill answered, as he turned down into the ravine. It had done him good to have another little chat with Jessie. She was so pleasant and friendly and spoke in such a quaint, interesting manner.

Jessie Anderson was a girl of medium height, with a sweet, ruddy, oval-shaped face and large gray eyes with long lashes. She had thick, wavy, light-colored hair, which she usually wore in two braids which hung nearly to her waist. Every one who knew Jessie always loved her for her sweet kindly disposition and her pure character.

She was only a young girl—barely fifteen—but she was a splendid worker. Perhaps she did not do quite as much as she sometimes imagined, but nevertheless she was a great worker. She, together with her grandmother—her only woman companion—kept house for her father and whatever additional guests might come to the mountain home.

Jessie would always rise early, go about her work cheerfully, without any compulsion from any one; she knew what to do and she always did it. There was never any fooling about her, either, when there was work to be done; after which she was always ready for a frolic, or a long walk through the woods, where she loved to gather woodland flowers and dainty, green ferns. Jessie was always happy; she liked company; she liked somebody to talk to; but if there was no one around, she would be just as happy alone. Although she had but few companions, she was never lonely and always could find something to occupy her time.

Jessie had lived all her life in the mountains and dearly loved her home; she seldom left it, and when she did it was only in cases of necessity. Her mother had died when she was but a small girl, and then the grandmother had taken the mother's place and had done her best for her son's child. The grandmother was very hard of hearing. So it need not be wondered at if Jessie had a few ideas of her own, and managed things in her own way. Her education up to this period consisted of a common country-school training. She had just graduated at the close of the previous school term. The school lacked in many ways; the teacher usually being young and inexperienced. But through it all Jessie was bright and she managed to get a fairly good education.

Above all things Jessie was quick; she was like

the mother in this respect, her father being slow. Whatever Jessie did she did quickly, in order that she might have it over with as soon as possible and get ready for the next thing. She usually spoke in a quick way, using as few words as possible.

## VIII.

## A MOUNTAIN VINEYARD.

Sunday morning, according to agreement, Bill started up the steep ascent of the vineyard to visit Jessie in her mountain home. Several times he paused to admire the beautiful scenery of the Santa Cruz Mountains, which grew in grandeur the higher he climbed.

It was just twelve as he entered the gateway, or, rather, opening between the blackberry briars that grew by the roadside, and walked toward the house. The roadway, after entering the vineyard, had been, for a considerable distance, hewn from the hillside, leaving at the right a steep embankment eight or ten feet high; at the left was a declivity. On this latter stood the winery, a two-story building; but as it was built on the hillside, it could be entered from above or below. The road branched off here; the lower part descending to the lower door.

On the opposite side of the roadway stood the barn, a small two-story structure, with the steep hill rising abruptly behind it. Beyond the barn a short way stood three neat-looking, white-washed cabins, side by side. These cabins were used by the



men who helped gather the grapes during the vintage, and with the wine making.

Last, stood the house, facing the south. It was a well-built, two-story structure, with a wide veranda on the south side, and occupied the only flat space on the vineyards, except a small yard space at the rear and some ground at the west that Jessie used for her garden. Beyond this the hill descended again, very abruptly, almost forming a precipice. In front of the house the hill gradually sloped downward to the county road, and was entirely covered with grape-vines. The upper hillside was also planted in grapes for a considerable distance. They were known as the upper and lower vineyards.

As the youth approached the house, looking from side to side at the various buildings, Jessie, who had been sitting on the veranda watching, hurried across the yard to meet him.

"I'm awfully glad to see you," she said smiling. "I'd just begun to think you weren't coming."

Bill lifted his cap. "I'm glad to see you, too," he replied candidly. "You've got a nice place here, haven't you?"

"Yes; but come over to the house and I will show you the view; it is the finest from there. Father built the house just where he would get the finest view."

Together the two walked toward the house and ascended the stairs to the porch. Here, Jessie offered Bill a chair, which he gladly accepted.

"Isn't it nice up here?"

"It certainly is! No wonder you think so much of your home."

As the young fellow sat there, he looked beyond at the beautiful view that lay before him. A picture of mountain ranges, spurs and ridges with their lofty peaks which they wear like royal crowns; all trend, some higher, some lower, in colors of blue and green, silver and gold, until they disappear in the distance—a picture of wooded slopes and forests, with their giant trees or their pigmy trees; a broad, green meadow with a ribbon-like stretch of shrubs hiding some mountain stream, fields of waving grain or checkered vineyards; all colored in deepest of shades or softest of tints betwixt the sunlight and shadows. To add to this marvelous picture of Nature, were mountain homes nestled deeply in some shaded valley or perched aloft on a distant view-point, columns of curling smoke rising heavenward; and a flock of soaring birds, rising, then gently falling, as they pursued their journey, ever alert for some signs of prey. And over it all the warm sunshine lay, together with the blue haze, the dreamy summer time, and with the clear, azure sky above. It was a picture that no artist could ever paint.

"Would you like to live here?" Jessie at length asked of her new-made friend. "I think father will let you have one of the cabins if you'd like to; they're a lot better than the one you've got. He says he wants to see you first, though."

"Yes, I'll come if he'll let me."

"He's coming now," the girl added as she heard some one opening the door.

Bill upon looking toward the door saw a pleasant-appearing man of medium height, thick set, and with iron-gray hair as well as mustache and chin-beard, standing in the doorway. He had a pipe in his mouth. Bill noticed that Mr. Anderson walked with a slight limp, as he came toward him and shook hands after Jessie introduced the two men.

"Well, I will go in now and help granny prepare dinner; then you shall eat with us; after that I will show you around." Thus Jessie disappeared within the house.

Mr. Anderson sat down beside Bill and the two men talked until Jessie returned a little later and summoned them to dinner.

"This is granny," she said softly to her guest, as an elderly Scotch lady came into the room. "It's no use to talk to her; she can't hear very good; and father don't like to talk, so whatever you've got to say, you may as well say it to me."

The grandmother came over and shook hands with him and smiled kindly; so Bill felt all he could do was to smile in return.

Then they all sat down and disposed of a dinner which Bill pronounced the best he had eaten for many a long day, for the food at the mill was coarse and roughly prepared.

After dinner the happy girl escorted her friend

out—to show him her garden. “I won’t bother to show you the house; boys usually don’t like houses; so come out and I’ll show you my garden,” she said, leading the way into the yard, with Bill following. “Things don’t do so very well up here; we have so little water. After we use all the water that’s in the cistern, we have to wait till it fills again, and it takes nearly all day—in the summer time.” Jessie began pointing. “These are pansies. They look pretty good, though; don’t you think so?”

“Why, yes! They look fine. It reminds me of a pansy bed mother and I used to have back home.”

“Here by the house are some geraniums and a few roses. Now, come over here and see my vegetables. I have lettuce, onions, carrots, beets, and over there are cabbages.” The girl pointed at the various articles of vegetation as she spoke.

“It must keep you busy with all these things, besides your house work?”

“Yes, I’m busy all the time. Some people ask me what I do up here to kill time. Well, I just wish they’d try it a while.”

“Over there are peas, beans and potatoes. Father cares for those. We get all we need, anyway. Now come around in back of the house; I’ve got something there that I know you’ll like. Do you like rabbits?”

“Yes, I always liked rabbits. I used to have some when I was at home,” he replied, sadly.

Thus he followed Jessie to the back yard, where

she showed him her snowy-white, pink-eared rabbits.

"Those are the chickens over there. I have ten; they lay what eggs we need. Now come over, and I'll show you the winery."

"Have you a dog?" Bill asked, eagerly.

"My dog died! Just before I went away. I felt terrible; we used to have such good times, romping through the woods together. Father's going to get me another as soon as it gets a little older. I've a cat, though. 'Tim,' I call him. I have to console myself with Tim, for the time being. These are the cabins," she added, as they passed them. "We use them when the men are here picking the grapes and making wine. We used to have boarders, and sometimes, when the house was full, we put some in the cabins."

"Don't you have boarders any more?" Bill asked, for want of something to say.

"Not many," Jessie replied. "They were too much trouble; nothing suited them. The beds were too hard; the cooking didn't suit them; there was too much pepper in the soup for some, and not enough for others; and the hill—they nearly DIED climbing up the hill. I can't think of all the things now, though. Father finally said he wouldn't have another one on the place."

Meanwhile they had reached the winery, and after Jessie opened the upper door, both entered.

"Now, you see," Jessie began, in a businesslike manner, "these are the presses. They put the

grapes into them, where they are pressed, and the juice runs out here at the bottom and goes through these troughs into the vats, which are downstairs. Come over here; the stairs are at the other end."

Bill followed Jessie across the floor and down the stairs into the lower part of the winery, where the large vats were.

"These, you see, are the vats where the juice goes and is left to ferment." The girl pointed toward the huge vats, in her eagerness to please her guest. Over here is the cellar. When father came there was a cave here; so he built the winery over it, and made the cave a little larger, and it makes a fine cellar."

She walked over to the cellar door, opened it and stepped inside. Bill stood at the doorway, and looked in at the rows of wine kegs that finally disappeared in the darkness.

"Would you like to try a little of our wine?" Jessie asked, courteously, as she picked up a small glass from the top of the wine-keg.

"I—I don't believe I care for any," he stammered, stepping backward.

"Why not? It's all right. None better anywhere." Whenever any one refused to take wine which Jessie offered, she imagined that it was because they were doubtful of its wholesomeness.

"I know that," he replied, kindly, "but it's because I—I promised my mother before she died that I'd never taste a drop of liquor." Bill had

broken one promise, but he was determined not to break another.

"Oh!" exclaimed Jessie, horrified. "This isn't liquor! It has to be shipped away to the cities and put into bottles before it becomes liquor! We wouldn't keep a drop of liquor on the place! Have some?" she again inquired, looking up at Bill, as she stooped before the keg, with her right hand holding the faucet and with her left holding the glass under the spout.

"I guess I'd better not take any, Jessie. Thank you—just the same."

"Well, then, if you don't mind, I'll just take a little for myself." Jessie helped herself to a small portion of wine in the glass and then disposed of it. "I don't take very much at a time, for some days I have more than one caller; and if I had to drink a glass full with each one, it would be too much for me."

"I suppose what little you took couldn't hurt you," softly commented the youth.

"Never has yet," she replied decidedly, as she closed the cellar-door. "Are you ready to go now? I suppose you've seen everything you want to."

"All right, we'll go."

So they went upstairs again.

"I wonder who shut the door!" Jessie cried surprisingly, as she reached the top of the stairs. "I wondered what made it so dark!"

They went across to the door. Jessie took hold to open it; the door was fast.

"It's locked!" she gasped. "I believe father locked it, not knowing we were in here. It's funny, too, for he seldom locks it only at night. How shall we get out?"

"Can't we get out the door downstairs?"

"No, that's always locked."

"Can't I get out one of those windows downstairs?" The windows were all on the south side—both up and down stairs.

"No, you'll fall down the hill and be killed if you try that." She sat down on an empty wine-keg as if resigned to her fate. "Fancy being locked up here for a week."

"A week!"

"Yes, a man once was. We were all away but father, and he was coming to stay a week with us and then bring us home. Just before he locked the winery the man went down to get a drink without asking father. Then father went away and when he came back the man was still locked up. Father said he guessed the man didn't care much; he said there was nothing in the world the man liked so well as wine."

For a few moments all was silent, while both thought diligently for some means of egress.

"Where are all my plans?" Jessie suddenly exclaimed.

"Your plans?"

"Yes. I always form plans for what I will do ahead, so that when the proper time comes I won't have to stop and think; it takes up too much



time. I have a plan if the saw-mill should burn—father says it's bound to some day, the men are all so careless. I have a plan if father should have heart-failure—he's bound to some day, all his family have died with it."

"What is your plan?" Bill inquired curiously.

"You wait till the proper time comes and you'll see."

"Would you go for a doctor?"

"No, indeed! I tried that once and I'll never do it again. Once granny got a fish-bone stuck in her throat. I did everything I could think of—I hammered on her back; I tried to reach down her throat and get it out—but no use, she just kept coughing, till I thought she would die. Then I started to run, down the hill as fast as I could go—to the station; there I got a man to telephone for a doctor. After that I ran home again, not knowing whether I'd find her dead or alive. When I got back, here was granny peacefully seated on the front porch, crocheting. She'd got it out while I was gone. Oh, but I was mad!"

"Well, you did what you thought was for the best. That's all anybody could do."

"Yes," she responded softly. "But that wasn't all. That night after we had all gone to bed, I heard some one knocking down stairs. I jumped out of bed and went to the window and asked who was there. It was the doctor just arriving. I told him granny was all right; that he needn't stay; but if you please he wanted to be paid just

the same, so I had to go and wake father. Then it was father's turn to get mad; it took nearly all the money we had on hand. I couldn't help it. What would you have done if you'd been there?"

"It's hard to say, Jessie," he added solemnly. "It seems whatever we do in such cases, we do wrong." Bill wondered if he had done wrong in leaving as he did; or should he have remained and suffered the consequences.

"Well," Jessie continued, "I'll never run for a doctor again; no matter what happens. Can't you think of some way out?"

"I don't think of any; unless I could get out one of the windows."

"But you can't. Then again both were silent for a few moments.

"Oh, now I have a plan!" Jessie suddenly exclaimed, jumping off from the keg.

"What is it?"

"Back in the far corner, up in the roof, is a hole; there is a chute comes down from the upper vineyard in which they slide the grapes down. You climb up there and call to father. Perhaps he'll hear."

"All right!" The excited youth hurried toward the corner indicated and started climbing the ladder to the hole in the roof. "If I can't make him hear, I'll climb up the chute to the hill," he called back to Jessie.

"No, you can't do that! They take the chute away when it isn't in use; it's in the way."

Bill reached the top of the ladder, stuck his head out of the hole in the roof and called several times, but no one responded. "I'm afraid it's no use," he at length called down.

"Well, come down, then," Jessie replied disappointedly. "We'll just have to wait till father comes."

After calling again a few times, Bill gave it up as a bad job and descended to the floor again—to find the door standing wide open and Jessie in the doorway laughing "fit to kill." When she could control herself she said:

"I thought I'd try it again and it came open as easy as could be. I wonder what could have been the matter with it before?"

"That's funny," Bill said smilingly. "I've known doors and windows to act just that same way before. Let's go out while we've got the chance."

Thus they went out into the sunshine again and walked toward the house.

"Come over and see Dolly," Jessie said, leading the way to the barn, where she opened the door and both entered. There stood Dolly, a small, sorrel mare, nibbling on a few straws of hay. Jessie went over and patted her on the neck. Dolly whinnied, for, horse-like, she was always glad to receive a little attention.

"I think you've seen everything now," the

hostess remarked pleasantly, after they were again out of doors, "unless we go to the top of the upper vineyard. From there you can see all over everywhere, even to the Monterey Bay, and at night we can see the lights of the Casino. I guess it's too warm to go up there to-day."

"Yes, I think so, too."

"If you come up to stay, we'll go up some evening, so we can see the lights. I've wanted to for a long while, but I don't have anybody to go with."

By this time they had reached the porch of the house and Bill sat down to again admire the beautiful picture before him, while Jessie retired into the house. A little later she returned and selecting a chair sat down.

"Father says you may come up here and live in one of the cabins if you wish. He says you look all right. He's going away in a few days to help a friend build a house, and won't be here at night, so he'd be glad to have man on the place, so granny and I won't be alone. I'm not afraid though."

"Yes, I think I'll come," Bill responded cheerfully. "Casey said he was going away in a few days and then I would be left alone. I wouldn't like that; it's so lonesome down there in that ravine at night. How much does your father want?"

"Oh, he won't ask you very much. You can go inside and ask him if you want to. He's in there reading."

Gladly the youth hurried into the house, and after conversing with Mr. Anderson for a few minutes returned and joyfully said:

"I'm coming. Your father says he'll be glad to have me, and I know I'll like it better than down below. I think I'll bring my things up to-morrow evening after I am through work."

"I'm so glad!" Jessie clapped her hands for joy. "I'll have some one to talk to. Father won't listen to me, and granny can't hear; so I never have anybody to talk to."

"Now I think I shall go. I've enjoyed everything so much," Bill said, complaisantly moving toward the steps. "Night is coming on."

Jessie walked with him to the gateway, where they parted, she returning to her home. The youth continued down the steep road through the fast lengthening shadows, feeling happier, by far, than he had for many a long day. Often in his joy would he pause to gaze at the distant ridges bathed with the rosy glow of sunset, contrasted with the deep shadows of the lowlands, like tinted clouds. As he watched, the light grew fainter and fainter, as the shadows crept up the mountainside, until all the sunlight had disappeared, and only the feeble twilight remained.

## IX.

## A NEW HOME.

The following evening, after his day's work was done, Bill went to the lonely cabin where he gathered his few earthly belongings and started for his new home at the vineyard, hoping that there his life would be a little more cheerful. It was always "poor Tom" wherever he went though; there was no rest from that. The thoughts of "poor Tom" and his "awful mistake" would ring in his ears as long as he lived.

By living at the vineyard it would be a little further to walk to and from work; but then Bill did not mind that, for by so doing he would have company in the evenings—some one to talk to—for that was the hardest time of all. During the day he was busy and had his mind on his work, and after retiring he was fatigued with his day's labor and would usually soon fall asleep and have a good night's rest. Again he would have a better room and bed as well as more wholesome food, for the meal prepared by Jessie and her grandmother was far better than the rough saw-mill fare. After this he would have only to take his noon meal there.

So with these thoughts it was with a cheerful heart that Bill went, softly and whistling, up the hill to his new home.

Jessie was sitting on the veranda reading when her guest approached. "So you've come; I'm so glad," she said, as he came up the stairs.

"Yes. And I'm real glad, too. It was lonesome down there, and when Casey goes—he's stopped already—I don't believe I could have stood it alone."

"Put your things on the porch and sit down," Jessie continued kindly. "After a little I'll show you to your room. I've been waiting here for father; he went to town to get some things we need."

The youth placed his traveling case on the porch and sat down. "What are you reading?" he asked courteously.

"This is one of my school-books—'Evangeline.' I always liked it. Did you ever study it?"

"Yes, I did and I always enjoyed it; it's such a pretty story. Do you go to school any more?"

"No, I finished our school last year and I can't go any more unless I go away from home. I can't do that; I'm needed here."

"Have you a good school up here?"

"The school's all right, but it's the teachers," the girl rattled along. "They send us the poorest teachers they can find. They simply don't know anything. They lay everything to 'inexperience,' but I know better; it's just because they don't

know anything. Why, the last one we had was worse than any of 'em. Why, she didn't even know which end of a pencil to write with. I took my paper up the first morning she was there for her to mark, and, if you please, she picked up her pencil and tried to write with the wrong end. Then I said as nicely and politely as I could, of course: 'You'd better turn that thing up the other way if you want to write with it.' Then she began shaking all over and said she didn't know what she was doing; so I finally had to mark my paper myself. It was all right anyhow. They've always got some way out of everything though. Anyhow we got her so she did pretty good by the end of the year; now she's goin' to teach somewhere down in Santa Cruz this coming term."

While they sat there talking the sun was sinking to its rest. The two watched it as it sank lower and lower, behind the distant tree-tops on a neighboring ridge. The last fading rays flooded the mountain-tops; the canyons were in deep shadow. The golden beams shone through the trees like long, slender fingers pointing hither and thither on the mountain-sides to the different things of beauty. Then as the sun sank lower, only the highest peaks were flooded with light. In another moment it was gone; only the distant sequoias remained silhouetted against the roseate sky where it had so lately been. Night was coming on with its deep shadows.

"Now it's gone!" Jessie exclaimed. "And



father is coming; I can see him below just turning up the hill. Come, let's go and meet him."

The young people rose from their places and leaving the veranda started across the yard to meet Mr. Anderson, who soon drove into the vineyard, stopping at the barn.

"Father, did you get everything? Did you get coffee? I forgot to tell you we were nearly out," said Jessie eagerly, also stepping up to Dolly and petting her on the nose. "Well, Dolly, are you glad to get home?"

Dolly whinnied her approval.

"Yes," her father replied indifferently. "I brought coffee and all the rest of the things you wanted, Your grandmother gave me a list of what was needed. You can get Bill to help you take the things out of the wagon and carry them into the house."

"All right, Mr. Anderson, we'll get the things out," Bill replied, willingly advancing toward the wagon. Soon he, assisted by Jessie, removed the packages from the wagon, while Mr. Anderson unharnessed the horse, after which they carried the supplies into the house.

"Now come," Jessie said, after everything had been put away. "I'll show you where you're going to sleep."

"I'll go and get my things from the porch; then you can show me," Bill called, as he hurried away toward the front of the house. A few moments later he came back, bringing his luggage,

and went toward the cabins, where Jessie was awaiting him.

"The last one, I'm going to give you," she said, as her companion approached. So, taking a key from her pocket as she walked up the steps, she unlocked the door. "I've got everything ready for you. I spent all morning cleaning and sunning the bedding, so that everything would be nice when you came." With that she opened the door and displayed a small, neat bed-room.

"You've a good bed, a chair, a place over there to put your clothes, and a place to wash. If you need anything else, just let me know."

Bill entered. "This is fine!" he said cheerfully. "I know I'll be much happier here than I was down in that lonely ravine."

"I suppose," Jessie added, hesitatingly, "that before I go I may as well tell you." Here the girl paused.

"Tell me what?" he asked, not knowing what to expect.

"This is the one where the murder was," she at length added, sheepishly. "I thought you'd like it; boys usually like those things better than girls. It's nice to have something like that to think about—nights—when you can't sleep. See! There's some of the blood over there on the wall. It isn't really blood; it's only where people have splashed the water when they were washing, but you can imagine that it's blood—if you want to."

Bill shivered at this horrible information.

"Don't, Jessie," he coaxed, nervously. "I'd rather you hadn't told me that."

Bill considered that he already had enough to think about nights in the murder line.

"I must go now," Jessie said, fearing she had better not have spoken, as she turned and went down the stairs. "Good night."

"Good night, Jessie."

In spite of being in the murderer's cabin, Bill felt happier in his new home; but he did wish that Jessie had not told him that awful news.

After the youth had been at the vineyard for a few days, Jessie came up to him one evening, and said: "Father says he'll take us to Santa Cruz on the Fourth of July, if we want to go. Today is the first, you know. You'll have a holiday on the Fourth. Would you like to go?"

"I—I don't believe I really care to go. I'd already planned on going fishing." Bill had a reason of his own for not wanting to appear in Santa Cruz.

"Well, then, we won't go," she replied, with satisfaction. "You must be just like I am; you hate to leave these beautiful mountains."

"Yes, I do like it here," he answered, much relieved. "But you needn't stay home on my account, if you'd like to go."

"I know. I don't care much about going, anyhow. I don't like it down there; there's too many people to suit me. I can't move but what I bump into somebody, and they always scowl at

me as though it was my fault entirely. Father says I ought to go slower; but then I'd just as soon stay up here, where there's plenty of room. I tell you what we'll do. You can go fishing in the daytime, then in the evening we'll go up through the upper vineyard to the top of the mountain, and from there we can see the lights from the Casino, and also the fireworks. Won't that be nice?"

"Can you really see the fireworks, so far away?"

"Yes; not so very good, though. They look small. We'll go up anyhow, if you wish."

"I'd like to go. We can go before dark, so we can get the view. It would be much finer there than it is here."

"No finer; only you can see much more. You can look in all directions up there; it's one of the highest mountains in this ridge. Yes, we'll go early; I want to see the sunset from there."

So, when the Fourth came, Bill went fishing, the result being that they had mountain trout for supper, after which he and Jessie started to climb the mountain. They had a long, steep climb up the hill, scrambling among the grapevines with Jessie leading, for she knew the way. About halfway up the slope the vineyard ceased, the higher part being uncultivated. It was too rocky.

"Hu-u-u!" Jessie paused, out of breath. "It's hard work," she said, as she paused for a moment's spell. "Now we can see the water."

Both looked toward the south at the blue water

of Monterey Bay for a few moments. Then Jessie started up again.

"Do you think we'll be able to get down without trouble, after dark?" Bill cautioned.

"Yes; with the moonlight we can get down all right, but if it was a dark night, it would never do to stay till after dark. I thought of that before I asked you. I hope it won't be foggy tonight down by the water; it is sometimes. It would be too bad after all our trouble."

"We'll hope it won't."

At length the mountain top was reached, after much exertion, and the boy and girl began looking around at the magnificent panorama that encircled the mount. For nowhere in the world does the scenery surpass that of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

"The sun is just about ready to set now!" Jessie exclaimed. "Let us sit down and watch it."

"Isn't it grand, though?" Bill added, as he looked beyond at the light-flooded ranges with their many spurs and beautiful trees, and then below into the darkening canyons.

After a little the sun had gone down, and the two young people sat there talking as they awaited the darkness, so they might see the lights and fireworks from the Casino.

"Do you see over there where that smoke is rising?" Jessie asked, pointing toward the east.

"Yes, I see it."

"Well, a friend of mine lives over there. Sometimes I go over and stay with her all night; then

again she comes and stays with me. We have grand times together. Her name's Adelaide Mason. Oh, but I think Adelaide is such a pretty name. If I had the naming of myself, my name would surely be Adelaide. She's away now; she won't be back till school opens. She has to go one more year."

After a little the darkness came on and the lights began to twinkle, far away down by the water front. It made Bill think of another night when he had watched the twinkling lights below him. It brought it all back; he began to think again of "poor Tom" and how it had all happened.

"Do you sing?" A sweet voice near by brought him back to the mountain-top.

"N-not exactly. Sometimes I holler; that's as near as I ever come to singing. Do you sing?"

"A little," Jessie answered, unaffectedly. "A few songs we learned at school. Shall I sing for you?"

"Yes, go ahead!" he said, gladly. "It would be nice."

"Well, all right. I'll sing 'Hail Columbia.'"

So Jessie began singing, and her sweet, girlish voice sounded out over the mountain-top. Bill thought he had never heard a girl sing so sweetly.

"She can sing far better than any of the girls at the Hi," he thought, as he sat there listening.

At last the song came to an end. Jessie ceased.

"That's fine!" cried Bill, emphatically. "You ou——"

"Now wait!" Jessie interrupted, abruptly. "I'm not through yet. I'm going to sing another. Do you like 'America'?"

"Why, of course; everybody likes 'America.'"

Again the young girl began to sing in her clear, sweet way; and, while she sang, several times she pointed to where, far, far away, down by the Casino, a tiny rocket would shoot through the air; then, gracefully curving, would burst and send forth a shower of red, green or blue as the case may have been.

In due time the song was ended.

"Now, how you like that?" she asked, immediately upon finishing her song.

"It's fine!" her companion exclaimed, enthusiastically. "Jessie, you've got a wonderful voice. You ought to go to the city and have your voice cultivated. You could make lots of money singing in the big theaters of San Francisco."

"Sing in a theater!" She was amazed. "Why, I can't even speak when I go to the city—let alone 'sing'."

For a while they watched the fireworks. After they ceased the two arose and started on their downward path. The feeble light of the new moon proved sufficient to enable them to reach the house in safety.

"Haven't we had a nice time?" Jessie asked,

pleasantly, as she climbed the stairs of the front porch.

"Yes, I've enjoyed it."

"Much better than if we'd been down there bumping into everybody. Haven't we?"

"Yes."

"Good night." Thus they parted for the night.

A few days later, just as Bill was returning from work in the evening, Jessie came running to meet him. Just by the winery she stopped him, and said: "Somebody came today—a young man; he drove up in a cart. I don't like him a bit. He wants to stay here; says he came up here for a few days' rest. At first I told him that he couldn't stay; then he showed me a note from father telling us to give him a room and meals for a few days. So I just had to let him stay. He says his name's Mr. Miller. Well, I just won't 'Mr.' HIM; he's too much of a 'kid.' If I can't find out his other name, I'll just call him 'Miller'." Jessie was very indignant over it all.

"I suppose," Bill answered, thoughtfully, "it must be all right; your father sent him."

"I've put him in the first cabin, so he won't be near you," she further added. "I hope he won't turn out to be a murderer."

"A murderer!" Bill gasped. "Why, Jessie, what makes you say such awful things?"

"I can't help it! Whenever a stranger comes here I always find myself wondering if he is a murderer. This is just the place one would take to—



to hide. Nobody would ever think of looking up here."

Bill fairly choked at this information. Jessie noticed his embarrassment.

"Oh, you needn't worry. I wouldn't think of such a thing about you. You don't look like the murderin' kind. I must be careful what I say, though. I didn't think about you being a stranger; you've been here so long."

"I—it's all right," Bill managed to say.

"Oh, look! He's just comin' out of his cabin now. Come over, and I'll introduce you."

Bill followed Jessie over to where the newcomer, a young man wearing a sombrero-like hat, stood before his cabin gazing at the mountain scenery. Jessie introduced the young man, after which she retired to the house to help her grandmother prepare supper. Bill talked with the stranger for a few minutes, and then turned toward his own cabin to wash before dining. Thus the newcomer was left alone.

Joseph Miller, or Joe, as we shall call him, was a young man of medium height, quite stout, with light hair, blue eyes and a florid complexion. There was one other thing worthy of mention—a small thing, scarcely noticeable; but, as small things often become large things, it may be well to mention. It was a sparse-looking arrangement, the same color of his hair; it was on his upper lip. Joe was something of an egotist, as well as given to exaggeration, and was a very, very brave appear-

ing young gentleman, of perhaps twenty-two years.

The next evening Jessie was at the bottom of the hill waiting for Bill, at the fork, when he came from work. She had been gathering flowers that afternoon, and as she waited she arranged her bunch of California poppies in a satisfactory arrangement.

"He makes me tired!" she said, as Bill approached.

"Who? Miller, you mean?"

"Yes, I do!" she responded, decidedly. "He's got altogether too much to say. He asked me about everything. Who comes, and who goes. He wanted to know who you were, and why you were here; and how long you'd been here. Then he wanted to know if we had any tramps around here. I just told him, 'No!' I'd like to know what business it is of his. He came out into the kitchen this morning, when I was at work, and I asked him what he wanted. He said he was hungry, and wanted me to give him something to eat. Now, I don't like people like that. I'm willin' that they should have all they want at the table, but I don't like to have them coming into the kitchen, asking for things."

"Did you give him anything?"

"Yes, I gave him a piece of pie; but I told him out plain not to come back for any more."

"Did he go away then?"

"Yes, he went away; but in five minutes he was back again. I asked him what he wanted, and he

said he didn't know what to do with himself. 'I wish I had something to do. It's hard to kill time up here, isn't it?' he said. Well, I just told him that I didn't have any trouble killing time. Then I put him to work; I took him out on the back porch and put him to work shelling peas. In five minutes I went back to see how he was getting along, and he was gone. He had shelled exactly eleven—I counted the pods, so I'd know, for sure, just what to tell you. Now, I know how to get rid of him if he bothers me again."

"I wonder what he's here for, anyhow," Bill said, curiously. "I talked with him awhile last evening, and he seemed displeased about something; I couldn't make out just what. He said he hated to be away from town just now, everything's so lively there."

"Never mind, I'm watching him," Jessie said, cautiously. "There's something up. I'll find out, though. Father must know; he gave him permission to come. Wait till father comes home; perhaps he can tell us."

"When will your father be back?"

"Not for a few days; he's gone to help a friend build a house. Maybe it will be a week."

"But there is another thing," she continued, "that I don't like. This morning I took Joe out and showed him everything, just as I do everybody else; finally, I showed him the winery, and there I gave him a glass of wine. I saw my mistake, though, for just one glass was enough to set him

talking saucily. This afternoon, just as I was coming out to go for a walk, I caught sight of him coming out of the winery. I asked him what he was doing, and he said, 'Nothing.' But I noticed he got red in the face—if it could get any redder. The truth of the matter was he had been in the wine cellar. I could smell it on his breath. I didn't say anything more, though, but I just locked the door and put the key in my pocket. I'll fix him."

"I hope he won't cause any trouble," Bill replied, doubtfully.

"He won't. Don't worry. If he says much more I'll say something as well. He can't get the best of me."

"It's certainly cheeky for him to help himself to wine."

"Yes. That's one trouble we always had with the boarders; they would get into the wine—or out of it would sound more grammatical. Then, if father would say anything, they'd tell him that that was what they came for, and if they couldn't have it they'd go away. So he had to let 'em have it. Once a woman left the faucet on, and an entire keg leaked away. Oh, but father was mad!"

By this time they had reached Bill's cabin, and as he turned to enter, Jessie hurried on toward the house.

## X.

## THE ANARCHIST SCARE.

The following evening, when Bill returned from work, Jessie was anxiously awaiting him at the gateway.

"Something has happened," she began, cautiously, as he approached.

"What?" he asked, excitedly.

"I don't know," was the undecided reply. "It's about Joe. He went away this morning soon after breakfast, and hasn't returned yet. I wonder what can have happened to him?"

"Did he go in his cart?"

"No; he walked away."

"Maybe he's just gone for a walk; he was at the mill this forenoon. If he don't show up by the time we're through supper, I'll look round and see if I can get any trace of him. He'll probably come by supper time."

So Jessie, half satisfied, hurried off toward the house, and Bill went into his cabin. After a little he went into the house, and in due time the family sat down to supper—without Joe. They had just finished with soup when the door between the dining-room and sitting-room opened; the belated

Joe walked in and sat down in his accustomed place. He appeared very nervous and excited; it was apparent to all that something unusual had happened.

"We thought you were lost, Joe," Bill said, in a friendly manner, for want of something to say.

"Oh, no; I was just out for a stroll through the woods," Joe answered, carelessly.

"But you were not here for dinner," Jessie added, curiously.

"Oh—that's so." Joe had forgotten. "Well, you see I—this morning, I was rather tired and I lay down on my bed and took a little nap," Joe bungled. "The fact is, I didn't waken until after your dining-hour was over; so I didn't like to bother you."

Jessie knew this information to be untrue. Only just before dinner she had gone to the two cabins and made the beds. She had had company that morning and had been delayed in her work. She made no reply to Joe's remark, but, nevertheless, her curiosity had been aroused. She arose, and removing the soup-plates retired to the kitchen; a moment later she returned with the supper, and said:

"We are going to have trout for supper. I had a caller today; a young gentleman from San Francisco, who said that he was a banker's son." Jessie placed the platter of fish with the other victuals at her grandmother's place for her to serve; after which she again sat down. "Just

imagine ME entertaining a banker's son. He has been in the mountains for a few days on a fishing expedition and got lost; so he came up here to see if he could locate himself. I showed him around and, of course—considering who he was—I was unusually nice. He stayed to lunch with us; then he offered to leave his fish, saying that he had no use for them himself, not being, able to take them back to the city. Of course I was glad to get them."

"After dinner I showed him through the winery and offered him some wine—just as I do everybody. At first he refused. I guess he thought it wouldn't be good enough for city folks until it came out of a bottle; but after I took a taste, he said if I didn't mind he guessed he would take a little."

"Did you get locked in again?" Bill asked playfully. 14

"Don't you worry about me ever getting locked in there again," she replied emphatically. "I'm too smart for that! I put a rock before the door this time!"

"What became of him then?" Joe asked inquisitively, looking at Jessie very closely. He evidently had a large bump of curiosity.

"I showed him the right road to take to the station, and after thanking me for my kindness he started down the hill."

Joe resumed his "picking" at his fish. He didn't

seem very hungry, in spite of the fact that he had missed the noon meal.

"Oh, yes!" Jessie exclaimed. "There's one thing more: he said that he was coming up here for a month, next summer, because the fishing is so good around here. He asked if we took boarders. I do so hope he comes; he was so nice. I can't imagine anything much nicer than a banker's son."

The meal continued in silence for a short time. Later, Jessie again spoke: "What shall we do after supper—play games?"

"Yes, I just as soon," Bill responded willingly.

Joe only fidgeted in his chair. A moment later he spoke nervously: "I am going to ask Bill to help me with a few matters of importance in my cabin first; after that we will come in and play games, or whatever you like."

Bill looked wonderingly at Joe; Jessie as well.

"All right!" she replied. This arrangement seemed to satisfy her.

Supper over, the two young men returned to the sitting-room, while Jessie and her grandmother washed the dishes.

"I would like to speak with you a few minutes," Joe whispered softly to Bill, also taking him by the arm and starting toward the door.

Bill was now curious to know what the trouble could be, that Joe seemed so upset over; so he went willingly with Joe, out of the house and across the yard into Joe's cabin. After they had



entered Joe shut the door securely and fastened it.

"Now, my man, listen here—not a word to any one—remember!" he began, with particular stress on each word. "I may as well tell you first as last—who I am—and why I'm here. This is the truth of the matter: I am a secret service detective sent here from Washington."

But this was more than Bill could endure. At last he had been traced. It was all over with for him. Completely overcome, he sank into a chair and began trembling in every muscle.

"Don't be alarmed!" continued the secret service detective provokingly. "There is nothing to be afraid of. So long as you do not plot against your country, steal or kill—you need have no fear of a secret service man. All I want is a little help from you; so calm yourself and be brave—like I am."

"Now this is the way things stand," Joe went on very importantly. "Remember, not a word to anyone. All over the United States there are bands of lawless men—sordid and unprincipled men—called Anarchists. At a given time there will be an uprising, and they will attempt to overthrow the United States government. Now, these men must be suppressed, for they are growing in strength every day. It happens that one of those bands are forming right here in these mountains, where they hope not to be molested."

"Anarchists!" Bill interrupted. He had recovered from his scare and sat upright on the

chair, looking up into Joe's face; but he was dumfounded at this latter information. "Anarchists in these mountains! Impossible!"

"Nevertheless it is true," the detective replied decidedly, "and I am sent here by the government to suppress them, which I intend doing in short order, if you will give me a little help. It was just by a lucky chance that I dropped into their rendezvous this evening. It upset me quite a little. You know down in that ravine at the foot of this mountain are some cabins?"

"Yes," Bill answered nervously. "I used to sleep in one of them before I came up here."

"Did you? Well, it's in one of those cabins; there they hold their meetings under cover of darkness and then before morning all quietly disappear. One of them was already there on guard; he threatened to shoot me. The others will assemble as soon as it is dark. So if you will come with me I will show you something that will surprise you."

"I would rather not. I don't care to mix in such business. Does Mr. Bradley know anything about it?"

"Hush! not a word to anybody, or my plans will be ruined. I expect to make a name for myself out of this little affair. You must come. I need an assistant. Remember! I have the authority to demand it of you; so you had better come peacefully. I should hate to arrest you. Do you see that?" Joe hastily turned back the lapel of

his vest and displayed a glittering star, and then as hastily concealed it again, giving Bill a mere glimpse.

"Well," Bill replied timidly, "if that is the case, of course I'll do whatever you say." Bill did not want to be arrested for several reasons.

"As soon as it is dark we will go together, then," Joe answered with satisfaction.

"I think you ought to have more of your own men. Two cannot capture a band of desperate men."

"Have no fear; I shall do nothing to-night. I merely want to learn their plans. Then if it is necessary, I shall send for more of my men."

"All right," was the solemn reply.

"Come now," Joe said encouragingly, a little later, moving toward the door. "I think it is dark enough, and you know it will be darker down in that ravine." Joe gave a slight shudder, almost unnoticeable, at the word 'ravine'. "Don't let your nerve get away with you. There is nothing to fear. By the time you are as old as I, and have had as much experience as I, in this line of work, you will think nothing of a small matter like this."

"I don't believe I'd ever care to be a detective," Bill answered truthfully, as they left the cabin and hurried down the hill at a lively pace in the deepening gloom. After reaching the fork at the base of the hill, where the path led down into the ravine, Joe paused; Bill followed his example.

"My! but it's dark down in there!" Joe uttered alarmingly. "I can't see anything. Can you?"

"Not very well," Bill answered, trying to appear brave. "If we keep to the path though we'll have no trouble."

"Well, you better go first, then, if you know the way; you've been down here oftener than I," Joe responded with the least quiver in his voice.

"All right," Bill offered reluctantly. Thus he turned and started down the declivity with Joe closely following. All was quiet except the gentle murmuring of the stream below in the darkness, as it ceaselessly moved along, or the swish of the ferns as they brushed against the lower limbs of the young fellows as they cautiously advanced.

"Be careful!" Joe expostulated, as he nearly stumbled over a rock in the pathway. "I can't see where I'm going. It's as black as ink down here. I wish I hadn't taken this damned job."

"I can see all right now," was the cheerful reply. "We're coming to the bridge now. Be careful!" He started over the bridge.

"Wait!" Joe cried with a quiver. "I'm afraid I'll fall in. Now I'm all right," as he found his footing on the narrow bridge.

After both were safely across the bridge, the assistant continued up the opposite path with his superior closely following, until they were within sight of the cabins. Here Bill paused.

"What are you going to do now?" he whispered.

as he turned toward Joe. "Shall we go any closer?"

"No, wait!" Joe cautioned in a whisper. "I shall watch here a bit first. We must be careful. We have to think of our own hides. If they catch us, they will make short work of us. Do nothing only as I direct. Let us get behind this tree and watch."

Bill followed Joe behind a large redwood, where both sat down upon a projecting root to watch developments. Not a sound was heard but the rushing stream below them.

After a little Joe said softly: "I think I shall go up to the cabin; perhaps I shall learn something. If I hear anything I'll let you know. I'm getting so's I can see better now." He arose to go.

"Which cabin was the man in?" Bill whispered.

"The second one; I took particular notice."

"Did you see him?"

"I only got a glimpse of him as he looked out the broken window."

"What kind of a looking man was he?"

"He was a black, desperate-looking fellow, I should judge about thirty years of age. I would take him for a foreigner of some sort."

"What did he say to you?"

"He threatened to blow my brains out if I didn't go away." Just then there came a crash, through the stillness; Bill jumped up.

"What was that?" he asked.

"A limb fell from one of those trees; I think it hit that cabin—the third one."

"Be careful then! It may arouse them! Get behind the tree!"

Joe dove behind the tree and for a few minutes the detective and his assistant breathlessly clung to the shadow of the tree, dreading what the result might be. Silence reigned, nothing disturbed the quiet except the repeated squawking of some bird aroused from its slumber by the falling limb. At first it startled them; but when they realized what it was and silence again settled around them, after the bird had ceased its lament, Bill spoke:

"I don't believe they're there at all. We haven't heard a sound from the cabins."

"I'm going to the cabin now; if they're there yet I think I can hear them talking from that broken pane. If you hear anybody coming whistle softly, so I can get away."

Joe very stealthily advanced toward the second cabin. Bill watched him from his position by the tree; saw him creep softly up to the window where he paused with his ear at the broken pane. He thought that Joe must be very brave to go so close to such a place of danger. The least noise might put him in the hands of the desperadoes within.

In a few minutes Joe left the window and tip-toed quickly back to where his anxious assistant stood waiting.

"They're there," he whispered. "I heard one of them speak in a louder tone than the rest; it

was the same voice—without doubt—that I heard this evening. It's the only thing I could distinguish. They are very careful not to be overheard. This is what he said: 'Dammit! What's the matter with things anyhow? I'll be glad when this business is over with!'

"What are you going to do now?" Bill asked tremblingly.

"I'm going back again to listen. I want to get their plans if I can." Joe, obviously, was in his glory now that he could see all right, caused partly by his eyesight becoming accustomed to the darkness and partly because the light of the rising moon becoming stronger. The queen of the night had risen to the crest of the adjoining mountain and was now looking down into the deep ravine through the drooping branches of the ancient sequoias. Just as he was about to start back to the cabin, he turned and in a loud whisper said to Bill: "Perhaps you had better get behind the tree if you are afraid." Joe, himself, showed no signs of nervousness.

So Bill stepped back toward the tree, but not behind it. He wanted to see what the brave secret service man would do. Joe crept softly back to the window and stood there listening again for some time. Then he left the window and moved noiselessly toward the door; here he listened a moment, after which he carefully reached up his arm, took the knob in his hand, unlatched the door and slowly pushed it open; while he himself

stood hidden by the house from anybody within. Bill nervously watched every movement, scarcely daring to move, expecting any minute to see the Anarchists dash out and capture Joe. He thought the detective was doing a very risky thing in opening the door; but then he, doubtless, knew what was best to be done. The trembling youth stood ready to run if Joe was captured. There was no use in him being taken if he could escape. As he watched excitedly, he saw Joe reach into the room and catching the door underneath, slowly drew it toward him, and when it was closed he reached up again, took the knob within his hand, gently latched the door and turned away.

Bill, who could hear the latch click from where he stood, was afraid that the Anarchists, hearing it as well, would be out upon them; so he stepped behind the tree.

Joe was coming back to the tree with long strides when suddenly "something" went up the slope from the rear of the cabin, through the bushes—like the shot out of a gun—and then suddenly stopped somewhere above.

"What was that!" exclaimed Joe in loud whisper.

"I don't know! Whatever it was, it went lively. I don't believe it could have been a man, for surely no man could go like that."

"Maybe it was a dog or some wild animal! Have you seen any wild animals around here?" Joe shivered, as he was getting nervous.



"Not since I came; but one of the men at the mill told me that several years ago he shot a mountain lion somewhere in this ravine."

"A lion!" Joe gasped. "Well, come, we may as well go. I've done all I could to-night."

Thus the two boys turned and hurried down the path and after crossing the bridge ascended to the road above.

"Well, I'm glad to be out of there anyhow," Joe said, breathing a sigh of relief. They started up the hill toward the vineyard.

"So am I," Bill returned, also relieved. "I don't like that kind of business anyhow."

"It is nothing."

"Did you get what information you wanted, Joe?"

"Well, not exactly; but to-morrow night we shall probably have better luck. I don't think there could have been many there; everything was so quiet."

"To-morrow!" Bill repeated. "Will we have to go again to-morrow? I think that I shall speak to Mr. Bradley in the morning; he has charge of these cabins and I think that he ought to know what's going on in them."

"Don't do anything of the kind!" Joe answered firmly. "If you do, you'll ruin all of my carefully laid plans. I expect to make a name for myself out of this affair. If it gets out, the Anarchists will change their meeting-place. So, not a word."

"All right, Joe, just as you say. You surely know what's best in cases like this."

"I certainly do! But I would like to know what it was that went up that hillside so speedy—whether it was man or beast."

"There's only one person I know that could go that fast," Bill said playfully.

"Who?"

"Jessie. When once she gets started, she can go just like the wind."

"Jessie!" Joe exclaimed amazed. "So she's really one of them! I've suspected her from the very first."

Bill immediately saw his mistake and was sorry that he had mentioned Jessie's name; he knew that, of course, it was not she. He had only spoken in fun. Thus he had aroused Joe's suspicions, needlessly, and might cause Jessie some trouble.

"A famous detective," Joe continued, "once gave me a pointer. He said: 'When you are working on a case, always look for a woman first.' So I have taken his advice and I always look first for a woman; if there is no woman in sight, I give up the case. If it hadn't been for this woman—if you can call her a woman—I should have been gone long ago."

Bill was amused, as well as indignant. "You are certainly mistaken about Jessie having anything to do with these law-breakers, so you may as well give up the idea."

"Perhaps I had," Joe responded softly. "Be-

sides I don't believe she could have gone up that hillside so quick anyhow."

By this time the detective and his assistant had reached the house and were just about to enter.

"Remember, now; not a word to anybody," Joe whispered cautiously. "Just walk right in as though nothing had happened."

Joe opened the door, walked in with a careless stride and tossed his hat upon a vacant chair. Bill followed him into the room a little uncomposed. Jessie was sitting by the table reading; she looked up upon hearing the boys enter. Her grandmother was dozing in a rocker in the far corner of the room.

"So you've been reading," Joe remarked carelessly, dropping into a rocker.

"Has anything happened?" Jessie asked wonderingly, as she looked from one to the other.

"Why, no!" Joe answered quickly. "Nothing at all. Why should you ask?"

"Why, you both look so scared! Your faces are perfectly white!"

"Are they? W—why it's the moon. I often get that way when I go out in the moonlight. Don't you, Bill?"

"Y—yes," stammered Bill, who up to this time had said nothing.

"Are you ready for your games?" Joe hurriedly asked, to turn the conversation.

"Yes, I've got a new game for this evening.

I've been thinking about it and reading while you've been gone."

"Can you read, and think of games at the same time?" Joe asked sarcastically. "I can't." Joe often made attempts at being funny.

"Yes—I—can!" she replied emphatically, placing her book upon the table. "I don't know how it is; I just guess I read with one eye and think with the other."

## XI.

## WORSE AND MORE OF IT

The next evening when Bill was returning from work, he saw two suspicious-looking characters going down into the ravine. He stopped and watched them as they ascended the path leading toward the cabins, until they were hidden from view behind the shrubbery in the vicinity of the cabins. Then he turned and hurried up the hill. Joe was sitting in his doorway; so Bill told him what he had seen.

Joe stood up and excitedly said: "You don't say! Those are undoubtedly the men I am after. So as soon as it is dark be on hand and we shall see."

After assuring the detective that he would be ready to help at the appointed time, Bill returned to his cabin to wash, before going to the house. As soon as he was ready, he came out and accompanied by Joe went to the house, where they found supper awaiting them.

After supper was over, just as they had arisen from the table, Joe stepped over toward Bill and whispered in his ear: "Come, let us get out of here, before we have this girl proposing some

'game.' If we have her on our hands it will ruin everything."

So, hurriedly, both left the house, going toward Joe's cabin as quickly as they dared.

"Hurry!" Joe exclaimed. "She's comin'." Bill turned just as he was entering, to see Jessie standing on the front porch of the house, looking in their direction. He entered, followed by his companion, who hastily closed the door—all but a crack.

"She's gone back into the house," he said, much relieved, after watching a moment. "It's lucky we left when we did. I always bungle when I have to make excuses."

While they waited for darkness, the young fellows sat talking; Joe relating to Bill many of his perilous adventures in the times gone by, and how bravely he had always conducted himself. When it still lacked half an hour of darkness, Joe, getting up, said:

"I think we may as well start before it gets too dark. Then I can get through the ravine easier."

"Why-do you say 'I'—are there not two of us?" Don't you include me?" Bill asked indignantly.

"Oh, yes, I have not forgotten you," was the careless reply. "But you see to-night I am going to act a little different. As soon as we reach the bottom of the hill, I shall tell you what I want you to do."

They were then walking down the hill at a brisk pace, through the deepening twilight. Below them, in the ravine, was darkness, but looking toward the west the trees still stood out plainly, outlined against the faint glow that still lingered in the western sky. Venus, queen-like, herald of the night, already shone resplendent in the western glow, and slowly, one by one, her attendants appeared.

"Last night," Joe went on, as they had about reached the bottom of the hill, "I noticed that you were a little timid; so I am not going to take you down into the ravine to-night. You must learn to nerve yourself though, if you expect to get along in this world."

Bill made no reply. At the fork both stopped.

"Now, my man, I'll tell you what I want you to do," the detective commenced very authoritatively. "Get behind those grape-vines at the side of the road—you may sit down if you wish—and wait for me. I have a whistle here. See it." He took a whistle from his vest pocket and held it up for his assistant's inspection. "If you hear me blow this whistle, come as quickly as ever you can; if not, upon no condition whatever are you to leave your position behind the grape-vines until I return. So, remember: if you hear the whistle, come as fast as your legs will carry you."

At this parting remark, our very brave secret service man, unaccompanied, plunged into the dark

ravine, to watch alone on such a dangerous mission.

Bill watched him until he disappeared in the darkness; then he—to obey orders—crossed the road and, stepping behind the grape-vines, sat down on the dry earth, thinking what a brave fellow Joe certainly was, to go down there alone into a nest of Anarchists; he never could have done it. For a long time he sat there in that clear, warm July night, watching the scattered stars and wondering what would happen. He dreaded the sound of the whistle; it might mean death. For surely if they were caught by such desperate characters, they might expect the worst. His thoughts made him nervous and set him trembling. As time went on the night grew brighter; the bright light behind the hill toward the east foretold that the moon would soon shine over it into the ravine. More than once as he sat there he wished that the grapes were ripe. He could easily have disposed of a bunch while he waited. There was a cluster hanging just by his arm; he took them in his hand—the grapes were small and green; it would have been several months before they were fit to eat.

Then, suddenly, through the stillness Bill heard the sharp report of a gun. The sound seemed to come from the ravine and went echoing and re-echoing through the mountain canyons, like a dozen shots instead of only one.

Bill jumped up, but remained standing behind



the grape-vine, wondering what could have happened. He was undecided what to do. Should he go and see what the trouble was? No, Joe had given him strict orders not to move unless he blew the whistle; so he concluded that the best course would be to obey orders, especially when they were those of a secret service man from Washington. Besides he was not anxious to go anyhow. If the whistle blew he would go; otherwise, not. Then he wondered if Joe had fired the shot, or if some one had fired at him—perhaps killing him; if so, of course he could not blow the whistle. Well, there was no use for him to go down if Joe was dead; he would likely meet with the same fate.

As he stood there trembling, at length he heard somebody running down the hill. Could it be Joe? No, surely he could not have gotten out of the ravine without him noticing. As the runner came closer Bill could see that it was a woman.

"It's Jessie!" he breathed almost aloud. Thus he stepped out from behind the grape-vines to the road, just as Jessie reached the bottom of the hill. If this had been some young woman, doubtless there would have been a scream when a man jumped out from the bushes; but not so with Jessie; she was afraid of nothing, as long as there were no tramps or murderers about. Besides she knew, immediately, who it was.

"Jessie!" exclaimed Bill excitedly. "I wonder what's happened?"

"I heard a shot! I wonder if somebody has been murdered?"

"I don't know! Joe's down there somewhere. I hope he hasn't been shot. How did you get here so quickly?"

"I was outside. I wondered what you boys were doing."

Just then a sound came from the ravine like a stifled cry from somebody, and they could hear the bushes rustling as though some one were running through them.

"Shall we go down and see what's up?" Jessie asked wonderingly.

"No," was the decided reply. "It's not safe. Besides Joe told me not to move, unless he blew a whistle."

"But, he may be killed and then he couldn't blow his whistle," she replied calmly. "What's he doing down there anyhow?"

"He's watchin' for somebody. I—I don't know exactly who."

"Well, let's go down and see, anyway. He may be murdered. Thus she stepped toward the path.

"But aren't you afraid?" choked Bill. He did not like the idea of going into that dark hole. "There may be murderers down there," thinking that this would deter Jessie from going down into the dark abyss.

"Perhaps I won't be afraid. Not if we catch the murderer. It's only when they're running around loose that I'm afraid; so if we can catch

him I'll feel safer. Maybe after it's all over with, I may have something, like I did the other time. Come on!" With that she started to descend.

"Wait, Jessie," her companion said nervously, taking her by the arm to prevent her from going into the ravine. "If I were you I wouldn't go down there. You are risking your life. I—I think I may as well tell you the truth. There is a nest of Anarchists forming down there in those cabins, and Joe is a secret service man sent here to watch them."

"Anarchists! What kind of things are those?" she asked curiously.

"They are men who plot against their country."

"Well, if that's all," she returned unalarmed, "we may as well go along down. I'd rather meet half a dozen of them—whatever you called 'em—than one murderer. Anyway I shan't rest till I know who's been shooting."

After this remark the fearless girl hurriedly started down the path as if nothing could stop her. Bill, not wanting to appear cowardly, very unwillingly followed.

They had almost reached the stream, when they again heard something plunging through the bushes. Jessie stopped just as she reached the bridge and crouched back behind a redwood sappling. "Get back," she whispered, "he's comin'." Bill stepped back close to Jessie.

Whoever it was on the opposite side was stag-

gering down the narrow path. The two awaited him breathlessly. The noisy little stream was outdoing itself beneath. Bill hoped that the man would pass by without seeing them. Just as the oncomer was about to dive across the bridge, Jessie whispered to Bill:

"Grab him! Don't let him get by."

Bill had no such intention; he was just going to caution Jessie to remain quiet when she suddenly jumped to grab the approacher as he crossed the bridge. Bill did likewise. Between the two they captured him.

"Oh—oh—oh!" screamed the man, terrified. "Let me go! How shall I ever get out of this hole?"

"It's Joe!" Jessie exclaimed.

"Oh—oh! It's you; you sc-sca—you—I—I'm lost! Where am I? H-how can I get out of this place?" All this came from what was left of our very, very brave detective after one of his thrilling adventures.

"Joe! What has happened?" Bill inquired excitedly. "Can't you tell us? Who was shooting?"

"Wh—why didn't you come when I called you?" the shaking detective demanded.

"Did you blow the whistle, Joe? I dildn't hear it."

"N-no; I—I forgot; but I hollered. Why didn't you come? I got off on the wrong track somehow. I thought I would never get out."

"You told me not to move under any conditions unless you whistled."

"Th-that's so," the quivering detective recollected. "I forgot the whistle."

"What's the matter with you anyhow?" Jessie asked, impatient to know what the trouble really was. "Can't you tell us what's happened?"

"Y-yes. Somebody's been murdered."

"Who did it?" the girl gasped.

"I don't know exactly."

"Well, tell us what you know," Bill added impatiently.

So, Joe, after calming himself as much as possible, began:

"After I left you I went over to the cabins. It took me a long while, for twice I lost the path and got tangled up in the underbrush—it was so dark. But finally I saw a light; I knew that it must have come from one of the cabins. So using it as a guide, I crept along through the bushes until I reached the cabins. I waited by the tree for a little to see what would happen. The light came from the second cabin, the same that they were in last night.

"I could hear no sounds from where I was, so I ventured over closer, where I could look in the window. The first thing I saw was a burning candle stuck in a bottle, which stood on an old chair. Then as I looked closer I could see a man's figure stretched out on one of the bunks and another man sitting in a chair in the opposite

corner quietly smoking. While I watched, the man in the chair picked up a gun that was standing in the corner and coolly and deliberately aimed it at the man on the bed. At first I supposed the man was only examining it; but suddenly, to my horror, a shot rang out. The man on the bed jumped up to a sitting position for an instant; then he dropped back—dead! After that I ran—I mean I started back for you; but I lost my way; I think I must have gone in the opposite direction. I never had such an experience; at least not for a long time."

"I can see the light from here," Jessie said, with her usual composure, having taken a few steps, beyond the bridge, after Joe had completed his adventure.

"What became of the murderer?" Bill asked.

"I—I don't know," Joe responded nervously. "But come; let's get out of this place. I can't stand—I think nothing can be done to-night."

"Let's go up to the cabins first and see what the trouble is—for ourselves, Bill," Jessie added. She was not over-anxious to believe all Joe had had to say; but she knew something serious must have happened.

"I wouldn't go to-night," Bill responded, not caring to go himself.

"But aren't you afraid?" Joe cautioned. "There's a dead man in that cabin," thinking to dissuade her.

"What's there to be afraid of with a dead man?

It's the live ones that I'm afraid of. Perhaps if we hurry we may be able to catch the murderer. Come ahead. I'm goin' to see this thing out, now I'm started."

So Jessie started up the path with Bill following and the very brave secret service man only a step behind Bill; he would have been abreast with him if the path had been wider.

Jessie, of course, was the first to reach the cabin. She ascended the steps, and opening the door without a knock entered. Bill followed, with Joe left on the steps outside; he would have been in though, only the other two blocked the way.

The dead man lay on the bunk with one hand hanging over the side, and was completely covered with a blanket. The other man still sat in the chair calmly smoking as if nothing had happened—just as Joe had described him. He partly arose upon seeing the three enter; but changing his mind, indifferently settled down again.

When Jessie entered the cabin she looked first at one man, then at the other. It was the first she had believed of Joe's story.

In a moment after entering, Bill stepped further into the room, thus giving Joe a chance to enter, which he very bravely did, for everything was very serene just then.

Bill looked at the bunk, where the dead man lay completely covered with the blanket—except for the hand which hung over the edge. This was almost more than he could bear; he wondered

if all murderers covered their victims with a blanket. Even the blanket seemed to mock him. Could he be losing his senses, or was it the tears that gathered in his eyes that made it look like another murder that he knew about? He looked at the other bunk to see what was there; only an old fish basket lay in one corner and the gun stood beside the bunk.

Just as he turned to look at the murderer, the fellow again arose and started for the door, as if to escape.

But Jessie was too quick for him. When she saw him start she hurriedly pushed the door shut and stood before it.

"Don't let him escape! Grab him!" she exclaimed, all in one breath.

Bill grabbed the man by the arm and held him, while Joe importantly put his hand in his coat pocket and drew forth a pair of hand-cuffs, which, after much fumbling, he at length fastened on the man's hands. He was getting more composed every minute. After securing the murderer's hands, he bravely drew forth from his hip pocket a revolver, and in a very commanding tone said:

"Step along here, now, my man! So you would murder your fellow man, would you? Well, we'll see about that!"

The man made no move to go; so Joe spoke again; this time pointing toward the door with his revolver. At this, the guilty one, doubtless thinking it best to obey orders, started toward the



door, muttering something incoherently as he advanced. Jessie opened the door to give him exit. Thus he went out of the house and started down the path with Joe following pointing the revolver at the man's back. The other two brought up the rear. Thus, in due time, this little procession reached the upper road, where all stopped.

The golden moon had, by this time, reached the summit of the opposite mountain and was then flooding the open place in the ravine with its soft light. Perhaps it wondered what this little drama enacted in its light could possibly be about, as it passed over the mountain-top.

"What are you going to do with him?" Bill asked a moment after pausing.

"Shall I get a rope?" Jessie asked, beginning to get excited.

"No, we don't need a rope," Joe replied promptly. "He's got hand-cuffs on; that's enough."

"Yes, but aren't you going to hang him?"

"Why, no, Jessie! You can't do that!" Bill responded, horrified. "That would be lynching. We must send him to Santa Cruz, where he will have a fair trial. Then if the jury find him guilty they may hang him." Bill shivered at the unpleasant thoughts.

"Well, have your own way. Where there's a man around I believe in letting him run things. But for my part I'd feel safer if he was strung up here somewhere. That's the way they did the

other one. Father tried to stop them; but he said afterwards he guessed it was as good a way as any."

Joe still held the revolver, pointing it at the murderer. For a few moments he stood quietly, then he began muttering and throwing his arms about frantically trying to free his hands.

"I believe he's crazy." Bill spoke in an undertone.

"He acts like it," Joe approved.

"Hush up, will you!" Jessie said to the man violently, stamping her foot as she spoke.

After that the fellow quieted down.

"I think," Joe began slowly, "if you will be so kind as to go and get my horse and cart and my few duds, that I will at once start for Santa Cruz. There is no use waiting until morning as I have the light of the moon; and besides I expect to make a name for myself out of this case; so you see I am anxious to get to town."

"All right," Jessie consented. "We'll go and get everything for you." So Jessie and Bill hurried off up the hill to get the desired objects, leaving Joe alone, still pointing the revolver at the unfortunate fellow.

"I really hate to send him to jail," Bill said sorrowfully as they hurried up the hill. "I almost wish that he would escape. Perhaps it was only a mistake; the man might not have intended killing his friend."

"Escape!" gasped the girl. "Do you realize

what you're saying? If a man like that's left around loose, he'll kill every one of us. Don't you worry about it being a mistake; people don't make mistakes of that kind. I think I know what I'm talking about; I've had them to deal with all my life. It seems as though I can't move without a murdering following me about."

Bill felt that she spoke the truth, but made no reply.

When they reached home, the boy went to the barn to get the horse and cart, while the girl hurried to Joe's cabin to get his things. In a short time she returned carrying his suit-case. Bill had about finished hitching.

"I hope I've got everything," she called, as she advanced. Jessie was not sorry to have Joe depart; nor did she want to miss any of his belongings, so he would have to return for them. "Are you ready?" she queried.

"Yes, I'm ready," he acquiesced. "Jump in!"

Jessie placed the detective's suit-case on the bottom of the cart and then hopped in herself. Bill, taking the lines in his hand, stepped in and sat down beside his friend. Thus they started down the hill.

"This is far better than walking, anyhow," Jessie said gladly, as they started off.

When they had nearly reached the bottom of the hill, they could see Joe, by the light of the moon, still pointing the revolver at the murderer, who stood sullenly with his hands before him.

"I'm afraid Joe'll kill that fellow before he gets through, if he isn't careful," Bill ventured.

"Well, maybe it would be just as well if he did," the girl responded heartlessly. "I'll never feel safe as long as I know he's alive."

As soon as they reached the spot where Joe and his prisoner stood, Bill stopped the horse and both jumped out.

"Your things are in the cart, Joe. I hope I got everything," Jessie said hurriedly, as she jumped out.

"Never mind, if you didn't I'll come back—if anything's left—some day when I'm not busy, and get it," Joe answered gallantly.

"Now, my man," he continued, "we'll soon have you where you won't kill any more of your fellow creatures. Get in there."

But the man made no move to obey.

"Lively now; do as you're told! In with you!" This time the detective pointed at the cart forcibly, and the prisoner, muttering as he went, stepped into the cart and sat down. He evidently concluded that it was just as well to obey orders.

"I believe he's deaf," Jessie whispered to Bill, as the fellow entered the cart.

"Joe!" said Bill, strongly. "You better be careful how you flourish that revolver around; it may go off and kill that fellow."

"Come here!" said Joe, taking Bill by the arm, and, leading him a little aside, he whispered: "Have no fear. It's not loaded." He, obviously,

would not care to carry a loaded revolver around with him. It might go off.

"Well, I'm glad of that," Bill answered, feeling relieved. "You'd feel awfully if you killed a man."

After this the secret service man returned to the cart, and, just as he was about to get in, turned and said:

"Before I go, Bill, I want to thank you for your kind assistance; it will greatly help me to win fame, I'm sure. I'm really sorry, though, to have troubled you at all. I could just as well have taken the man alone." Then, turning toward Jessie, this time removing his hat with a sweeping bow, said: "And you, too, Miss Jessie; I wish to thank you for your kind help; you certainly are a very brave young woman. This night's doings you will always remember among the pleasant little incidents of your mountain life."

Then, with another sweeping bow, he replaced his hat, which he had been holding in his hand, and, taking his seat in the cart, drove off down the road through the moonlight and the shadows.

Bill and Jessie stood there for a few minutes watching them until the cart disappeared around a curve in the road.

"Did you ever hear anything to equal that?" Jessie laughed. "Very brave young woman! Pleasant little incidences of your mountain life! Pugh! He certainly isn't very brave!"

"No; I don't believe he's very truthful, either."

Bill had begun to doubt the veracity concerning some of the things Joe had told him. "I wonder what's best to be done with the dead man."

"Leave him there till morning," Jessie advised. "He'll keep."

"Well, come; let's go home then."

"I wish father was home; he'd know what's best to do."

Thus they started silently up the hill, the one wishing that the murderer would escape, the other wishing equally as hard that he would not.

## XII.

## SOME EXPLANATIONS.

"Are you up?"

Bill was awakened by somebody pounding on his door the morning after the unfortunate accident.

"Are you up?" the voice came again. It was Jessie speaking.

"Yes! What's the matter?" called Bill, jumping out of bed and commencing to dress.

"I've got something to tell you; so hurry!"

"I'll be there in a minute!"

Jessie went down the steps to await her friend. She looked toward the east, where the sun was just rising over the distant hills and flooding the mountain sides with a faint, rosy glow.

Bill soon opened the door, and came out, asking excitedly: "What's happened now, Jessie?"

"What you you think?" she asked, as she turned and faced Bill. "I got up early—I couldn't sleep—and went down to have a look at things in the cabin, and see how the dead man was."

"Goodness! I hope you didn't go down there alone this early in the morning," Bill gasped, dumfoundedly.

"Why not?" she inquired, as though it were nothing unusual for her to rise before sun-up and go for a walk. "But listen; the man's gone—blanket and all."

"Gone! Who could have removed him this early in the morning? Surely, the coroner couldn't get here this quick."

"Say, Bill," Jessie asked in an undertone, "did you ever hear of a dead man coming back to life?"

"Why, no, Jessie! That would be impossible!" Bill wished, as he looked off at the rising sun, that such things could be possible.

"Well," the excited girl continued, "when I was going down the hill, just as I reached the bottom, and was about to turn down the path into the ravine, I saw a man leisurely walking down the road toward the mill. I remember now, he had a blanket just like the one we saw last night, strapped over his shoulder. Dead or alive, I believe it's the same man."

"Perhaps he wasn't killed, after all," Bill remarked, feeling relieved. "Joe must have been lying to us."

"Do you want to go down and see for yourself?"

"Not now. Wait until I go down to the mill. I'll look then. There's no need to look, anyway, if he's gone."

"All right. I'll go in and get breakfast, so you can get an early start. Come in whenever you're



ready." Jessie turned and hurried off toward the house, as if it were necessary to have breakfast an hour earlier than usual.

Bill re-entered his cabin, and lay down to rest until breakfast time, for he had got but little sleep during the night. It seemed to him that he had only just gone to sleep when the pounding commenced on his door.

When Bill went in to breakfast, Jessie came up to him and whispered: "I've been trying to tell granny all about it; but such a time as I had. First, she thinks you've been murderin' somebody; then she thinks I'm telling her something I read in a story-book. Now, I don't know what she thinks. I guess I won't tell her any more about it; there's no good scaring her."

"Just as well as not," Bill responded, for want of something to say.

After breakfast he started down the hill, wondering whether or not he should go over to the cabins and see how things were. Finally, he concluded that he would go directly to the mill and tell Mr. Bradley what had happened. Joe had gone, and, besides, he had begun to doubt the detective's veracity.

Having informed the foreman of the previous night's tragedy, and what Joe had said about the Anarchists, after reaching the mill, the two men went together back to the cabins. Upon entering, Bill first looked toward the bunk where the dead man lay so quietly the night before; it certainly

was empty. The gun was still standing by the bunk, and the fish basket lay in the corner where he had noticed it previously. A bottle ornamented with candle grease also stood on the empty bunk, where it had burned itself out. The young people had thoughtlessly left it burning.

"Well," began Mr. Bradley, "your corpse certainly has disappeared. Who do these things belong to?"

"I don't know. Perhaps to the other man—the one who was arrested. If this fellow was the owner, surely he would have taken them with him."

"Come, now, we may as well go; we can do nothing. No doubt, somebody will come from town soon, and then we can talk it over. I will take these things and care for them until we find out who the owner is. I believe I shall have these cabins torn down; they have caused us trouble several times before. As to the Anarchists you speak of—it is absurd to think of such a thing. If there were such doings going on around here, I think I would know something about it myself. Miller evidently was fooling you."

"Yes; but there must be something up, or else why should he be here? He's been staying around here several days. Surely, not to watch two tramps."

"Perhaps we'll know before the day's over. Come now."

Mr. Bradley left the cabin, followed by the

youth. and together they returned to the mill to resume their day's work.

That afternoon, after Bill had returned from work, just as he was about to enter his cabin, he heard somebody driving up the hill. He waited to see who it was, hoping that it would be Mr. Anderson. He was right. Just as Mr. Anderson turned and drove into the yard, his daughter gleefully ran out of the house and down to meet him.

"Here's father now," the girl called, as she passed Bill. "I must tell him everything."

The two hurried on toward the barn, where Mr. Anderson had already stopped, and, after getting out of the cart, began unhitching the horse.

"Father!" Jessie began, rather excitedly. "We've nearly had another murder. A man shot another man in one of the cabins down in the ravine, and we thought he was dead. This morning he was gone."

"Yes, so I understand. That's what I came home for," drawled out Mr. Anderson, apparently indifferent. He was one of those men who, while speaking, the listener always wishes that he could pump it out of him just a little bit faster. He was very different from his daughter in this respect. "I'm afraid," he continued, drawling, as he limped about the horse unfastening the straps, "that you young people have been making some mistakes, if what I hear is correct; but then I suppose I really am most to blame myself."

"Why so, father?"

"Well, you see, it's just this way: Last fall, when we were gathering the grapes, there were two men here who worked for me—for a time; but as they were of little use, except to drink wine, I finally discharged them. They left me and went to the cabins down in the ravine, where they continued to cause trouble. It seems that the fellows were playing cards one night, when one of the men accused the other of cheating. It was the same old story." (Bill shivered.) "A fight ensued, and if it hadn't been for the timely interference of Casey, one of the mill hands who occupied the adjoining cabin, there might have been murder." (Bill wished that somebody had interfered with a certain fight that he remembered.) "I finally had to send for the sheriff and have the men arrested."

"What else did they do, father?"

"A few days ago, when I was driving to town, I saw two men walking along the road, not far from here, coming in this direction. They looked to me like the same two that caused the trouble last year, so naturally it worried me to think I would be away and you and your grandmother here alone. I was afraid they might come up here and cause you trouble."

"You don't need to worry about us, father," Jessie broke in.

"Now wait; let me finish. When I got to town I happened to run across the sheriff; so I asked him if he knew what had become of the men. He told me that they had been arrested several times

since for various offenses. Then I informed him of how I had passed the man when I was driving to town. I also advised him to be ready in case they caused us trouble up here again—if I should send for him.

“The sheriff told me that he would send a man up, anyhow; but I told him not to do anything of the kind, for that would be a needless waste of money. The sheriff replied by saying, ‘Well, it’s just this way: I have a young man that is very anxious to become a great detective. Now, such a case as this would be just the thing to nerve the boy for a beginner, as there is not likely to be any real trouble, anyhow. If you’ll let him stay at your home a few days, I’ll send him up there with instructions to watch around the cabins a little while in the evenings. If there is any trouble—which I doubt—he probably can settle it. Anyway, I want to see what this boy’s made of.’ So I agreed; I suppose it’s as good a way as any to dispose of the county’s funds. Also I was glad to have somebody up here with you while I was away.” Here Mr. Anderson paused.

“But,” broke in Bill, indignantly, “he told me that he was a secret service man sent here from Washington; and that there was a nest of Anarchists forming here in the mountains; and that they met here every night in one of the cabins. Twice he got me to go down there with him to watch—both last night and the night before.”

“Ha-ha-ha!” Mr. Anderson broke forth. “A

little scheme all of his own to get you to accompany him, as doubtless he was afraid to go alone. A nice detective he would make—afraid to watch a couple of tramps alone.”

“I’d like to get hold of him again; I’d soon tell him what I think of him,” Bill returned, with a disgusted look on his face. “He tried to make every one here think he was very brave. If I’d known it was only two tramps I’d just as soon have gone down there alone.”

“Tramps!” Jessie exclaimed, shivering. “If I’d known they were tramps I don’t believe you’d ever got me down there.”

“Now,” Mr. Anderson continued, drawling, “as to this man whom you sent down to jail, I’m afraid you made a great mistake.”

“Why, papa? Would you let a man like that run around loose? He might kill every one of us.”

“We only did as Joe directed us,” Bill ventured, meekly.

“Well, perhaps you are not to blame,” Mr. Anderson answered. “I suppose I ought to blame myself—for having spoken to the sheriff. If I have left matters alone, doubtless all would have gone on as usual. What is more, I doubt now if either of these were the men I supposed them to be. Anyway, the arrested man was nobody I had ever seen before.”

“What did they do to him, father? I hope they didn’t hang him.”

"Now wait a minute," her father interrupted, impatiently. "If you'll give me a chance I'll tell you about him. The man is not a murderer any more than you or I, nor did he attempt murder."

"But, father; Joe saw the man shoot directly at the other, even if he didn't kill him. It's the next thing to murder."

"Now, just listen to me, if you wish to hear about your man," her father insisted, forcibly, "and don't keep interrupting. The fellow told us that when he and his companion went into the cabin, where they intended spending the night, they at first supposed the cabin was uninhabited, as it was quite dark when they entered, and they could see nothing in the bare room. One of the men immediately lay down in one of the bunks, and covered himself with an old blanket which was lying there; he was tired after a long tramp which the two had taken during the day, and was ready to sleep. This other—the one Joe arrested—sat down in a chair, and began smoking. He told that, after he had been smoking a few minutes, he saw a bottle standing on the floor; he picked it up to find a candle sticking in it. Then he lighted the candle, so that he might the better examine the habitation. The first thing he noticed was the gun standing in the corner, and a few other things. This made him think that possibly the cabin was utilized by somebody. So he sat there, quietly smoking, and waiting to see if any one came; if so, he intended leaving. After a little he said that

he picked the gun up and began examining it. Accidentally, it exploded. The fellow said that he didn't know much about firearms."

"But, father, Joe told us that he saw the man on the bunk rise and then fall back dead," Jessie edged in, not yet satisfied that the man was not a murderer.

"I wouldn't place too much faith in what Joe says; he seems to misconstrue things. It may be, though, that when the gun exploded the man was aroused from his sleep, and sat up suddenly, and then, not realizing just what happened, lay down again and resumed his sleep."

"That must have been the way of it," Bill commented. "You can hardly blame Joe, though, for being alarmed; it certainly looked like murder."

"Then another thing," Mr. Anderson resumed his story, "the man said that when you all entered he supposed that it must be your cabin, and he arose to go, but you, with a different idea, grabbed him, and thus sent him to town."

"Well, why couldn't he have told us that, instead of growling so much?" Jessie added, disgustedly.

"The man was a foreigner, and could speak no English at all. He just came to this country a few months ago. His companion could speak some English, he said, but he none. The sheriff had to get one of his countrymen to interpret for him. The men were coming to the mill looking for work.



Joe was very much crestfallen when he learned what an absurd mistake he had made."

"He'll lose his job for telling such lies, won't he, father?" Jessie inquired, anxiously.

"Well, I don't know about that," Mr. Anderson said, smilingly. "Not so long as the present sheriff holds his office, anyway; you see he's one of the sheriff's poor relations. Now, I must go into the barn and see if everything's all right."

Thus Mr. Anderson started limping toward the barn.

"Are you home for good, papa?"

"No; I'll be here a day or so, though; then I must leave you again for a few days."

After this the young people started and walked toward the cabins.

"Doesn't it beat all?" Jessie laughed. "And just think how I might have had that poor fellow strung up somewhere, if I had been running things."

"Yes, Jessie; that is where the danger of lynching comes in. Innocent men are often suspected of doing things they never think of doing. You see, I told you it might have been a mistake."

Bill wished that another murder that he knew about had turned out as pleasantly as this one.

"Yes, you were right," Jessie acknowledged. "When I get old and can't get about very well, I'm going to write a book about all the things that have happened to me up here. It would make good reading. Don't you think so?"

"Yes, fine. And what will you call your book—  
'Tramps and Murderers'?"

"No, indeed; I shall call it 'Pleasant Little Incidences of a Mountain Life'," she replied, with a seemingly affected manner.

## XIII.

## MOUNTAIN GUESTS—TOM, DICK AND HARRY.

One morning, while weeding in her garden, Jessie heard the honking of an automobile coming from the opposite side of the house. She dropped her hoe, with which she had been weeding, and hurried to the front of the house, where she could see who it was. The car had stopped near the winery, and the people were getting out.

There were five in the party, including the man who drove. The other four consisted of two men—one was tall, slim and fair-haired; the other, as well as the two women were short, pudgy people, of swarthy complexion. The women both wore automobile veils, which were very much in evidence as they fluttered in the mountain breeze. The two couples got out of the car as Jessie approached; but the driver remained seated.

"Good morning," said the tall, slim man pleasantly, as Jessie stopped before them, also bidding them "good morning" in return.

"We understand that you have a winery up here?" the pudgy man inquired.

"Yes," Jessie replied complacently. "That's it—over there." She pointed toward the winery

just back of the party. "Will you come in?"

"I—I don't think we'd better," commented one of the ladies. "D-do you have any wine at this season of the year? We thought it would be so nice if we could get a little pure mountain wine from one of the wineries." She smiled affectedly while speaking.

"Well, if you don't care to come in," Jessie continued courteously, come over to the porch and see the view. It is finest from there."

"But—" the short man began hesitatingly. "Well, come; let's go over and see the view." he concluded, turning toward the others.

Jessie started ahead, the guests following very reluctantly as if it were too far for them to walk. It was not scenery they had come to the vineyard for.

"What do you think of that?" Jessie cried, stopping in front of the house and looking off over the magnificent scenery that she never tired looking at.

"Oh, isn't that beautiful!" replied the woman nearest her, in a tone that might have been considered as ironical. The others made no reply, but stood looking toward the south.

"Now, would you like to see my garden?" Jessie asked of the woman who had spoken.

"Well, really, I'm afraid we won't have time. I'd like to; but you see we're in somewhat of a hurry," the woman returned with a forced smile.

"Would you mind showing us through the

winery?" the stout man asked. "The ladies are very anxious to see how the wine is made."

"All right," Jessie replied briefly, as she quickly started toward the winery, with the guests following. She appeared the least bit upset; she always had a formula for showing her home to visitors; and she liked to have them follow her about as she directed. The winery came last. These people were unmanageable.

Jessie led her guests into the winery, where she showed them the presses and other necessities used in making the wine, and explained the process of wine-making, at which the party seemed very much pleased. Then Jessie led the way down stairs, where she pointed to the huge vats, in which the juice was left to ferment. Just as she was stepping toward the cellar-door, doubtless to get some wine for her company, one of the women said:

"Could you let us try a little of your wine? We would enjoy it ever so much."

"Well," Jessie responded abruptly, coming away from the door, "I'm sorry, but it's all in the cellar and I haven't the key."

"Oh, you keep it locked, do you?" the pudgy man inquired sarcastically.

"Father believes in taking every precaution. If he were here, I'm sure he would let you have some. He went to Santa Cruz to-day to get some things we need. You must come again." After that she moved quickly toward the stairs and

began to ascend them. The guests looked at one another disappointedly and shrugged their shoulders, but followed Jessie up the stairs and out of doors. Soon they were in their car again and resumed their journey.

That evening Jessie was waiting for Bill by his cabin, when he returned from the mill, eager to relate to him the day's doings.

"They had the 'cheek' to ask me for it," she said indignantly after relating the incident. "Well, I just wouldn't give 'em any. I told 'em I hadn't the key. All the time the door was unlocked."

"Perhaps you ought to have given them some anyway, Jessie."

"I don't care. I don't like people like that," was the decided reply. "If they had waited and given me time, I should have treated them as I do everybody else. Nothing I did seemed to suit them."

"That's the way with some people."

"There's one thing, though: I would like to have had a ride in their car. I never had a ride in one."

"Didn't you? They're awful nice."

"Have you had many rides?"

"Only a few. The best ride I had was with Tom and his uncle; he took us up the coast to the Portland Cement plant, and back."

"Who's Tom?" Jessie asked curiously.

"He's a friend of mine."

"Is he a nice boy?"

"Yes—he WAS," Bill blundered.

"Was!" she repeated. "Well isn't he now?"

"W-well." Bill was getting nervous. "H-he's dead now."

"What did he die of?" inquisitively.

"I—I don't remember. I—I don't know exactly."

The situation was growing very unpleasant for Bill. He wished he had kept still about Tom. This was a lesson for him to be careful in future.

"Did you go to the funeral?" Jessie went on. This was almost as good as a murder story for her.

"N-no. I didn't. Well, the fact is: I was called out of town before it began," he stammered truthfully. "But I must go now and get washed for supper." He swung on his heel and hurried off to his cabin to avoid further questioning. He could endure it no longer.

In the evening they sat talking upon the veranda until night had drawn before them its dark curtain, hiding from them the beauties of the outdoor world.

"Come," Jessie said rising. "We may as well go inside." Bill arose and followed her into the house, where Mr. Anderson had already lighted a lamp and sat reading in his favorite rocker. Mrs. Anderson had already retired to her sleeping-room, tired after her hard day's work.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," Jessie cried suddenly. "Would you like to have me read you a story? This afternoon I was reading in one of

the magazines, and I found the cutest little story; I'm sure you'll like it. Shall I read it to you? I think perhaps I can put more expression into it than you could by reading it yourself, as I've already read it once."

"Yes," the youth replied frankly. "It'll be fine! Go ahead!"

"Well, you light the lamp, while I find the magazine; and then we'll go over in the opposite corner—so we won't disturb father."

So while Bill lighted the lamp, Jessie hunted through some magazines lying on the table, until she found the desired one, after which both sat down—Bill on the sofa, and Jessie in a rocker by the table, where she would get the full benefit of the light. After finding the desired page, she began reading in a sweet, low tone—so as not to disturb her father—the following story:

Tom, Dick and Harry.

There's just three of us; that's enough, though; we wouldn't want any more; if we did, there'd be trouble. We have grand times, too, away up here on the mountain top, where we live. There's much more fun bein' three, than if it were only one. It's much more fun rollin' down the green hill when there's three than if it were only one. We can roll and tumble all in a heap. Oh, but it's fun!

There's just three of us—Tom, Dick and Harry. I'm Dick, Tom's Tom and Harry's Harry. If you saw us you couldn't tell which was which;



we're all just alike—we're triplets, you know. We're all the same size; all got red hair, blue eyes and freckled face; but it doesn't matter—much—away up here on the mountain top. Nobody ever sees us, except father and mother, and they don't count. Besides father's away all the time—except when we're asleep; and mother's too busy to look at us; she always says, "run off and play." We wear hats just alike, shirts just alike, and pants just alike. That's all; we never wear shoes and stockings—only sometimes. We like it best without.

Whatever one of us does, the others do; we all talk together; we all whistle and sing together. When we go to school, we all three go together; it's much better than being only one and having to go alone; much more fun. We walk in a row; I'm always in the middle. I like the middle best, because then I have some one on both sides of me. We each carry a little dinner pail and always whistle as we go—just alike; we never get out of tune. Oh! but it's such fun, to be three of us!

We've got a gun, too—only one gun; that's enough. We all shoot with it, though. First, Tom shoots, then I shoot, then little Harry shoots. Harry isn't little; he's just as big as the rest of us; but bein' he always comes last it makes him seem littler. Sometimes I call Tom my big brother; he isn't any bigger than ME, though. When we're not shooting we carry the gun—Tom first, for a little while, then me, then Harry.

Sometimes we each bring home a little rabbit; we never shoot more than one apiece; that's enough for one time. Sometimes we shoot birds instead of rabbits; then we kill more than one apiece, because they're good and we like to eat them. Oh! but it's such fun we have together, we three. It's so much better than if it were only one.

We never have any trouble. If we fight, it's always in fun; and we all fight together. We stand in a triangle; then each fellow punches one fellow with one fist and the other one with the other fist. That makes things even. We never punch hard, though. Oh; but it's fun!

Then we have a pony; only one pony—that's enough. We all want to be together. Tom rides in front and holds the lines; I'm always in the middle; I hold the lines, too, and little Harry holds me—he's always last. And such fun as we have—the three of us—riding up hill and down dale, laughing and singing. Pinto enjoys it as much as we do. We're not too heavy for him; we're only little fellers. If we pass any one on the road, they always stop and watch us till we're out of sight. But we don't care—not when we're having a good time. Gee! but it's fun!

Sometimes we all go down to the brook and all take off our little hats and shirts and pants; then we jump into the swimming pool for a grand swim. Oh! but I wish you could see us! We enjoy it so—splashing and diving in the cool waters on the warm summer afternoons.

Again we all go fishing. We each have a little pole with line and hook; and each have a little basket hung over our shoulder. We all sit in a row along the river bank and fish. I'm always in the middle. And then we just love to gather daisies and sweet clover blossoms and take them home to mother.

We all have to do just alike; if I tear my pants, Tom and Harry tear theirs. Then when we're asleep at night, mother mends them. It must be so much more fun to mend three little pairs of pants than only one.

When we sleep at night, we all sleep in one little bed; we all want to be together. Father made it, and mother made the soft little blankets which keep us warm. I always sleep in the middle. Tom sleeps on the outside; he must be awful brave. I'd be afraid to sleep on the outside. Little Harry sleeps in the inside by the wall. It's much nicer to be in the middle, though; then I have some one on both sides of me. Oh; but it's such fun, all to get under the blankets together—much nicer than if it were only one!

When we wake up in the morning, bright and early, Tom hops out first, then I, and last—always last—little Harry. Then we put on our little shirts, and pants, and hats, and go out and bring in the wood; it's the only work we have to do. But then we don't mind, as long as there's three of us. It's much pleasanter for three to bring in

the wood than for only one to have to do it alone. It's fun for three.

Don't you wish you'd been a triplet? We always liked it; it's much better than being only one. Here, away up on the mountain-top where we live, we've always been together—ever since we was borned. And we're always goin' to live together; and when we die we're all goin' to die at once and all be buried in one little grave. Little grave? Yes, for I ain't very big; and I ain't goin' to fool you any longer, either. After all there ain't three of us; there's only one—only me. Tom and Harry died when we all was borned; but I like to think we're all alive; it's so much more fun bein' three than only one—away up here on the mountain-top.

"That's all. How do you like it?" Jessie asked immediately after finishing the story. Then she leaned back in the rocker with a sigh, as if exhausted by her reading.

"Fine, Jessie! It's a nice little story. You read it nicely, too."

"Do you know," Jessie went on after a minute's breathing spell, "that story reminds me of myself? Sometimes when I'm alone I just imagine there's some one else with me; so I'll have somebody to talk to."

"Yes, that's a good way to do," Bill approved.

After that the two sat quietly for a time, awaiting their proper retiring hour. Mr. Anderson still sat reading in the opposite corner of the room,

with his back toward them. Suddenly he leaned forward in his chair, and gave a sort of low moan or groan, and his book dropped to the floor.

Jessie jumped from her chair, dove across the room, and gave her father a terrific blow between the shoulder blades. "Are you alive?" she fairly shouted. Her face was white.

Mr. Anderson quietly arose to his feet and turning around said in a dazed way, "Why, Jessie," and without another word he quietly left the room, as if to retire for the night.

Jessie returned across the room looking very much embarrassed and whispered to Bill. "I thought sure he had his heart-failure that time; I've been watchin' for it for years. Now I'm glad it's over with. Some one told me that that was the best thing to do in cases of heart-failure. I'll never try it again though; I guess he was only asleep. Father is always goin' to sleep when he reads; but I never knew him to make that funny noise before. Did you hear it?"

"Yes," he answered amusingly. "It was only a sigh, Jessie."

## XIV.

## THE ANARCHIST AGAIN AND THE PICNIC PARTY.

One morning just as Bill was about to commence his usual routine at the mill, Mr. Bradley, the foreman, came running excitedly toward him from the direction of the cabins where the mill-men slept.

"Come here, quick!" he called to Bill, who instantly ran to meet him, wondering what could be the matter.

"There has been some trouble!" Mr. Bradley went on breathlessly. "Two of the men got into a quarrel; it was something about a gun. I can't get much out of either of them, though; they speak but little English. Now, it's just possible that it concerns the gun you found in the cabin. The men fought; one of them drew a knife and stabbed the other. Now we must have a doctor. I don't believe the fellow is seriously hurt, but he must be attended to. I want you to run up to the station and telephone for a doctor; so he can come up on the noon train."

"All right, Mr. Bradley," Bill willingly replied. "I'll run right up." Accordingly the ex-

cited youth started to hurry away in the direction of the station.

"Wait one minute," the foreman called. "I think you had also better telephone the sheriff. This man must be arrested."

Bill gave a sudden start. The sheriff—he was the last man in the world he would want to summon; but in another moment he was off—running up the dusty road. Perhaps when the sheriff arrived he could manage to keep out of the way, and thus avoid trouble for himself.

The men who quarreled were dark-skinned foreigners of some nationality. The wounded man could speak but little English and that very brokenly; the other could speak none at all. They had come to that locality only a short time previously and had obtained employment doing odd jobs about the mill. They were of little value, however, being a dissatisfied and lazy pair.

Mr. Bradley tried to find out the cause of the trouble from the wounded man; but owing to the seriousness of the wound and the man's inability to speak English he learned but little—other than that the trouble was concerning a gun, which he seemed to think the other had taken.

Mr. Bradley imagined that as the men had come to the mill about the time the gun had been found in the cabin in the ravine, it was possible that the foreigners may have stayed one night in the cabin before coming to the mill. Thus the wounded fellow may have absent-mindedly left the

gun in the cabin and forgot where he left it. When the unfortunate fellow improved, Mr. Bradley intended showing him the gun and asking if it were his.

Upon returning from the station, Bill hurried off toward the cabins to tell the foreman that the doctor and sheriff would be up on the next train. The first thing that met his eye was a man of swarthy complexion, with thick, black, bushy hair and a face-full of week-old whiskers, in the clutches of two of the mill-men. The prisoner was a young man between thirty and thirty-five years. His captors were tying his hands behind him with a stout cord. The fellow stood sullenly glaring at the ground.

"Is Mr. Bradley here?" Bill asked hurriedly of the men, as he paused a moment to watch the operation, pitying the unfortunate prisoner.

Thus Bill hurried off toward the cabins. One of the doors stood open; he looked in—the wounded man was lying in his bunk, groaning distressfully. Mr. Bradley and another who were attending him, turned upon hearing foot-steps outside. Bill gave his information, mopping his brow as he spoke, and then not knowing what else to do he returned to his duties. The prisoner, who meanwhile had been tied to a redwood sapling to await the coming of the proper authorities, looked sullenly out of his evil eyes at him as he passed.

Our hero returned to work a little upset. He hoped that the sheriff would not see him when he



came. Perhaps he could arrange to get behind a pile of lumber and thus avoid being seen by the dreaded sheriff. He had escaped so long, and was doing so nicely, that he hated to be trapped after this length of time. He wondered if the sheriff would recognize him—or know who he was, and what he had done—if they should meet. Any way it was best to keep out of sight, even if he missed his lunch; for the train arrived shortly before noon. Nervously he worked along.

During the course of the morning, at the expected time, he heard the whistle of the approaching train. It sounded louder than usual that day as it echoed and re-echoed among the canyons. It made his heart beat faster. Now he would have to watch out, or all his carefully-laid plans would be ruined. He hoped that the whistle for noon would blow before the sheriff could reach the mill. Thus he would be able to hide.

A moment after the locomotive ceased whistling, he heard somebody address him; upon turning around he beheld Mr. Bradley.

"Bill," he spoke quickly; "I think I will have you run up to the station and meet the doctor and sheriff; so no time will be lost. Our patient is suffering intensely. Like as not they will not know the way; so if you're there, you can bring them down without delay."

Provoked, the boy stood for a moment and looked at the foreman, as if paralyzed; he had not planned on such a thing as this happening.

If he went he would be running a terrible risk, and yet he dared not refuse. In another moment he was off, going as fast as though he expected to meet his dearest friend on the incoming train. He was not going to be cowardly—be the result what it may.

He reached the station before the train arrived and stood there awaiting it—white, nervous and out of breath from his hasty run up the hilly road. In a few minutes the train, after rounding a curve, came puffing and steaming along the curving track with the tall trees rising on either side. He dreaded having it stop. But, regardless of his fears, according to its daily custom the train slowed down as it approached the station and presently stopped.

The unfortunate youth expectantly and tremblingly watched for the dreaded arrivals. At sight of the first to get off, Bill gave a start of surprise. It was Joe. "What can Joe be coming up here for?" he wondered. The second to get off was a short, thick-set gentleman carrying a satchel—the doctor. The train having paused only for an instant, then moved slowly along through the tunnel on its way over the mountains. So the sheriff had not come. Obviously Joe had been sent in his place. Bill breathed a sigh of relief as he walked up to the incomers and told them why he was there. Thus the three hurriedly walked off toward the mill.

Joe conducted himself as importantly as usual,

much to Bill's disgust. He had half a notion to tell the braggart about what he thought of him; but then the doctor was along and he did not like to say anything before him. Perhaps later in the day he would get a chance; and if so, he would ask Joe what he meant by scaring him with all those lies about Anarchists, when he was only sent up to watch two tramps. So he spent his time telling the doctor, as well as Joe, what he knew concerning the quarrel, as they walked down to the mill.

As they neared the cabins, Joe, seeing the unfortunate prisoner tied to the tree, left the others and walked over toward him. Bill conducted the doctor on to the cabin where the suffering man lay groaning with intense pain. That worthy gentleman quickly entered to administer his professional aid. Bill then turned away. Just as he passed the last cabin, upon looking to the left, where the prisoner was tied, he saw Joe go up to the man and give him several severe kicks upon the thigh.

"So at last you are caught—red-handed—are you? Well, I'll teach you a lesson," he cried, showing temper.

Bill started to go over to Joe and give him a severe chastising for inhuman treatment of a fallen man; but just then Mr. Bradley came running from the sick man's cabin, and, calling to Bill sent him on an errand. When he returned, sometime later, the prisoner was still bound to the

redwood sapling, looking sullenly at the ground. Joe and Mr. Bradley were engaged very confidentially in conversation a short distance away from the prisoner. He delivered his message, after which Mr. Bradley bid him return to his work, which he promptly did.

It was only for a short time though, for soon the whistle blew for the cessation of work for the noon hour. Bill, as he stopped work, looked over in the direction where the prisoner still stood. Joe was sitting on a pile of lumber near by in the shade of a sequoia, guarding his charge very importantly and never taking his eyes off the poor fellow for fear that if he did so the fellow might escape.

Bill saw his chance. He hastened over to where Joe sat, and began first by saying: "What are you going to do with him, Joe?"

"I have an assistant coming up in a wagon," Joe responded egotistically. "I expect he will be at the station about one o'clock. I shall wait here until nearly that time; then I shall take this desperate character up to the station and when my man comes we will hurry him off to the county jail in a jiffy, where he will cause no further trouble. As soon as I heard of the trouble I started my man off and I jumped on the train, so as to get here quickly in case the fellow was unmanageable."

"Joe!" Bill demanded forcibly, "what did you mean by telling me there were a lot of Anarchists

down in those cabins, when you were only sent there to watch a couple of tramps?"

"Bill," Joe apologized kindly. "I'm sorry to have alarmed you; but I had good reasons for so doing. On my word of honor, when I went down to those cabins that first evening, just before I told you about the Anarchists, there was a man there who told me that he was an Anarchist. He pointed a gun at me from the window and threatened to blow my brains out if I didn't go away. Now, at first I believed him, and what's more—unless I'm very much mistaken this (again pointing at the man) is the same black head, the same black eyes, but as to the whiskers I could not swear. Evidently he was freshly shaven at that time and these villainous whiskers have appeared since.

"Now at first I was positive that I had accidentally stumbled on a nest of Anarchists, and I felt if I could learn of their whereabouts I could easily win fame as a detective. So surely you can't blame me if I wanted somebody to accompany me into that dark hole.

"The next day I gave up the idea of there being any Anarchists; thinking that if the man—whoever he was—was really an Anarchist, he would not have mentioned it. Perhaps he wanted to alarm me needlessly, for some reason or other; so I put him up to be a liar. The next evening when you reported having seen the two men, I immediately concluded that they were the ones

I had been sent up here to watch. So, thinking nothing of a couple of tramps, I left you above the next night so you would not be nervous. Then that awful accident happened; I thought sure that fellow had been shot, the way he acted. Now do you blame me for anything I did?"

Bill was thoughtful for a moment, staring at the lumber pile before him. If what Joe said was true, he would have no further hard feeling in the matter. But he knew of several positive lies that Joe had told, so he did not know what to believe.

"But, Joe," he finally said, puzzled, "who do you suppose the gun belonged to? Neither of the two tramps claimed it."

"Now that's just what I'm coming to," Joe interrupted forcibly, clapping his fist on his thigh. "It must belong to somebody. Who else but the Anarchist man? He was there—I saw and heard him. Now since coming up here to-day I have changed my opinion again. I believe the man really is an Anarchist. I believe now that he said what he did in order to scare me away so I would not interfere with the meeting. He was a sly one. Today, since coming up here—I have been talking with Mr. Bradley and he agrees with me in thinking that the man really is an Anarchist. He says that he has been having trouble with more than one of these blue-skinned foreigners, who have taken employment at the mill and can get but little work out of them. Anyhow I'm

sure that this is the man I saw at the cabin; so when I get him to town, we'll find out all about it. There's no use to question him here, he seems so sulky. Afterwards I'll let you know."

"Well, I suppose it's all right, Joe," Bill half-way forgave. "Only I don't believe he's an Anarchist."

"What's that!" It was Mr. Bradley speaking from behind Bill. He turned at the sound of the voice.

"Bill is inclined to doubt my word—concerning this Anarchist," Joe spoke, seemingly indignant.

"I can't believe the man is an Anarchist, somehow or other," he solemnly responded. "It don't seem likely."

"If I were you, Bill," Mr. Bradley advised, "I would say no more about these Anarchists. It may be possible that what Joe suspects is true. I am suspicious of several of the men employed here; so I intend to watch them. I think you had better keep as quiet as possible, until we simmer this thing down. Joe is quite positive that this fellow here is the one he saw at the cabins. It seems reasonable, too; as near as I can recollect, these foreigners arrived at the mill about the time the trouble came up. Then as to this gun they have been quarreling about, like as not the gun belongs to the wounded man. Well, as soon as he quiets down a little, I'm going to show it to him and find out for certain. As to this desperado here, on account of what he's done, he'll have to

be arrested—Anarchist or not. Then when they get him down town, they may be able to straighten things out.”

“How is the injured man?” Bill thoughtfully asked.

“The doctor says he’s not seriously hurt; he says he’ll be all right in a short time. The fellow’s more scared than hurt.”

“I believe I’ll take this Anarchist up to the station now; my assistant may come most any time,” the would-be detective said, replacing his watch which he had just examined, and, rising from the lumber, walked slowly over toward the prisoner and unfastened the rope which bound the unfortunate fellow to the sapling. His hands he left tied behind him. Then taking the man by the arm, Joe led him off toward the road leading up to the station. The unfortunate fellow went quietly, except for a little jabbering, incoherently.

“What makes him act like that?” Bill inquired of Mr. Bradley, as he sorrowfully watched the departure.

“Oh, he can’t speak a word of English,” Mr. Bradley replied, surprised that Bill had only just found out that fact. “He only came to this country a few months ago, with this fellow he has wounded. He is a Greek, I think. I managed to get a little information from the sick man, just before the doctor came. He can speak fairly good English; has been in America for five years. Last winter he returned home on a visit; and when he came



back this spring, this other fellow came with him. I imagine they are related in some way. Perhaps they are not concerned with Miller's Anarchism; but I believe it best to investigate."

"Yes. That would be perfectly correct. I must hurry now and get my dinner."

"So must I."

The two men turned and walked hurriedly toward the cook-house as the noon hour was fast slipping away.

Meanwhile, Joe, accompanied by the suspected Anarchist, slowly plodded along through the noon-tide heat, up the hill to the Laurel station. The Anarchist went along quietly, and Joe thinking that he would have no further trouble with him, soon took his hand from the man's arm, and together they walked along in silence. Just as they neared the station, the prisoner tried to run away, but Joe soon captured him, and—to show his authority—commenced brutally kicking the man about the legs. Joe easily lost his temper.

"What is the trouble?" some one called from across the railroad track. Joe looked in the direction whence the voice had come, and was surprised to see that he had an audience. A party of picnickers, who had just finished eating their lunch from a pile of lumber, arose and stood watching him and his charge amazedly. A four-in-hand stood a little apart from the picnickers patiently waiting for them to resume their journey. Joe was too dumfounded to speak.

"What is the trouble?" one of the gentlemen of the party again called.

"Why, this man is an Anarchist. There is a nest of them forming in these mountains, as well as others in various parts of the United States. They expect, sooner or later, to overthrow the government of the United States. I am a secret service man sent here from Washington to suppress them." Joe evidently never wasted an opportunity to sing his own praises, whether they were real or imaginary. "Do you see that?" he continued importantly, turning back his shirt front to give proof of his being a secret service man. But the amazed party were all too far away to see whether the proof was there or not. "This is the first arrest I have made; but others will soon follow."

After that the so-called Anarchist began muttering something in his own tongue, and showed temper.

"What is he saying?" anxiously inquired the member of the picnic party.

"He says," Joe responded gallantly, "—excuse the expression ladies—'To hell with the Americans'."

Just then a man in a small cart came driving down the road. Joe, upon seeing him, took the prisoner by the arm and led him across the track to where the man with the cart stopped. He ordered the Anarchist to get into the cart, which the unhappy fellow unwillingly did. Then just as

Joe was about to enter also, he turned around and, removing his hat, with a sweeping bow said to the picnickers: "Ladies and gentlemen, this has been put a pleasant little incident of your mountain drive." After which he replaced his hat, and stepping into the cart took his seat beside the other two. Thus the three drove off in the same direction in which Joe's assisant had come, leaving a much bewildered and horrified party of picnickers watching them until they disappeared behind an embankment. The picnickers then looked at one another, too dumfounded to speak, at the thoughts of Anarchists forming in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

The next evening as Bill was returning from work he was startled by a voice coming from behind the blackberry briars, just as he was about to enter the gateway.

"Here I am again." Bill looked up at the sound of the voice, to see Jessie standing there, with a glad smile spreading over her sweet face, waiting to meet him after a few days absence.

"Well, how did you get home!" he surprisingly exclaimed. "I thought your father wasn't going after you until to-morrow."

"I came on the cars this morning. Father will bring my things up to-morrow when he goes down. I just couldn't wait any longer. It's so stupid down there. My brother-in-law came home yesterday and will be there until Monday, so I wasn't needed any longer. This morning when I

hard the train coming it just put an idea into my head—'Good-bye,' I said to all of them—we had just finished breakfast—and I grabbed my hat and said I was going home on the train; and I started off on the run toward the station. When I got there I had no money to buy a ticket, so I just borrowed enough from Mr. Hartwell, the station agent, and told him that father would return it to-morrow. So here I am. It seems good to get home again. I believe I'd have died if I'd had to have stayed down there another night. Have you been lonely?"

"A little," he felt that he must acknowledge. "And Jessie, we had quite an excitement yesterday at the mill."

"Yes," she interrupted. "Father was telling me about it this afternoon. I'm so sorry I was away. It's just my luck though. I'm so glad to know at last who that gun belongs to. I've been dying with curiosity about it."

"But Jessie, that wasn't the man's gun after all—the one they quarreled over, I mean. To-day some one found the sick man's gun under his bunk behind some other things, where he put it. When they showed it to him he finally acknowledged that he put it there himself and then forgot where he put it."

"You don't say! Well, then, to whom could the other gun belong?"

"I don't know," Bill replied doubtfully. "It must belong to somebody; but we can't find out.

Come, now, let's move along." So they left the gateway where they had been standing and continued toward the house.

"I'll never rest until I find out who that gun belongs to," Jessie offered thoughtfully. "I'd give my new hat to know this minute."

"Did you get a new hat while you were away?"

"Yes; it's a beaut; it's got red poppies all over it. Bertha wanted me to get one that had purple pansies. She said it would be a little more subdued; but I liked the red one best. People will be able to see me when I'm comin' if I have somethin' lively on."

## XV.

## WHAT HAPPENED AT THE CROSS-ROADS.

It was a beautiful summer morning—one of those days when you just feel like saying, "Perfect! Could anything be more beautiful!" The air was clear and fresh, with a gentle breeze rustling through the tree-tops, and then dying away again, like strains of distant music. The bright, golden sunshine bathed the mountain-tops, as well as the deep valleys, till every leaf and every blade of grass seemed to reflect the glorious summer gladness; and the dew-drops sparkled in the grass like precious gems. Various songsters were busy in every mazanita and toyon, singing as if their very souls would burst into songs of joy. Here and there a cluster of late blooming wild flowers added their brightness to the scene, and a sweet fragrance permeated all—the mingling of grasses, trees and flowers.

The evening before, Jessie and Bill had planned on taking an all-day walk through the mountains, eating their lunch under the shade-trees somewhere beside the stream.

So when Sunday morning arrived—according to arrangement—they got a good early start, while

it was cool, and went down the hill. Jessie carried a small paste-board box, which contained their lunch. They continued on, past the mill, over the creek, and up the opposite hillside. They were both happy as they went chattering and laughing along the road of many ups and downs. If any one had mentioned the name of Thomas Lawrence to Bill that morning, he would doubtless have said, "Who was he?" For so quick do we forget the dear departed. But Bill had not forgotten; it was only while listening to Jessie, as she jabbered along in her quaint way, that he seemed to forget.

They continued their walk up the hill until they reached the summit; here they paused to admire the beautiful landscape that lay before them—the wooded slopes, the broad, green valleys and the foaming, rushing, murmuring water—far below them. After resting a while, they descended the opposite side of the mountain, until they nearly reached the bottom, where another road coming from the base of the hill crossed the one they were on, and continued on to their right, curving around a hill in the distance. The road they were on ran straight down and crossed the creek a little distance in front of them, and then disappeared between two hills on the opposite side.

"Which way shall we go now?" Bill asked hesitatingly, as they stopped at the cross-roads. "There are three to choose from."

"Well," Jessie began, "this one to the left goes back to the mill, only it's much longer. I think

we had better go home that way; there's more trees along it, and it will be cooler this afternoon. It's beginninng to get warm now. The road crossing the creek doesn't go very far; it stops somewhere behind those hills. This one to the right (she paused a moment), I don't know exactly where it goes; I don't come over here very often. Once I went on that road with father in the cart; but I don't remember much about it."

"Let's try it anyway," Bill suggested. "One way will do as well as another."

"No," Jessie disapproved. "Let's go down by the creek and eat our lunch, and have that over with, so I can get rid of this box. Then we'll decide what to do."

"Jessie, why don't you let me carry the box a while?"

"No. I'll carry it. Come on."

So they walked down toward the stream, and after selecting a suitable place beneath the shade trees, sat down and ate the lunch which Jessie had carefully prepared, with the sound of the mountain stream rushing among the rocks for their orchestra.

"If I had only thought to bring my pole; I might do some fishing," Bill remarked, after they had finished their repast.

"We can go fishing next Sunday, if you like," Jessie responded pleasantly. "Let's just sit here in the shade a while and rest. I like to hear the



water; don't you? Sometimes I sit and listen to it by the hour."

"Yes, I always like to hear it. It's like music. Do you ever go fishing, Jessie?"

"Yes; but I never catch anything. Father says I haven't patience. Well, I guess men make the best fishermen anyhow. Father always brings home a lot every time he goes; and so do you."

For a long time the boy and the girl sat by the creek talking, and enjoying the beautiful summer day. At length Jessie proposed that they continue their walk, which Bill agreed to do.

"Which way shall we go?" Jessie asked, not being able to decide for herself.

"Let's try the road crossing the creek; it looks pretty over there."

"But it doesn't go very far," Jessie objected.

"Well, we don't want to go very much further. We'll have a long walk home."

"All right! Come on!" Jessie jumped up as she spoke and was ready to start. Bill followed her example. They advanced toward the bridge, and after crossing it continued along the other side. At the left was a broad, green pasture; an old cow was peacefully grazing on the sweet grass. She looked up at them as they passed, for a moment, and then continued nibbling the green grass. After the two had gone as far as they cared to on this road, they returned and, re-crossing the bridge, ascended the road until they again stood at the cross-roads.

"Shall we go home the long way?" Jessie asked.  
"It will be cooler."

"All right," he consented. "But let's sit down here and rest a little first."

Thus they sat down on the dry grass by the roadside, where it was shady, to rest for a time.

"Some one has been camping here. See the place where they cooked their meals." Jessie pointed at a heap of blackened rocks a short distance away. "And there is a rope hanging to that tree, where they tied their horses."

"Yes. It's a nice place to camp. Come now," he added, after resting sufficiently. "If we're going the long road, we better get started; or we won't get home in time for supper."

Both stood up and started on their homeward journey, by the lower road; but had only gone a short way when Jessie suddenly stopped and said abruptly:

"Wait! I must get a drink or I'll die—before ever I can get home." With that she turned and ran off toward the creek. Bill watched her until she disappeared from sight, behind some willow bushes near the stream. It was only a moment though until she re-appeared, looking excited. Bill saw her running up the road as fast as she could come, until she was within hailing distance. He wondered if anything was wrong.

"Can you swim?" she excitedly called.

"A little," he cried wonderingly.

"Then come quick!" Thus she turned and again

hurried back in the same direction she had previously gone.

At her call, Bill started running toward the river, not knowing what possibly could excite his companion so greatly. When he reached her she was standing by the creek, a little below the road, near where they had eaten their lunch, looking intently into the water.

"What is the matter?" he asked, after reaching her side.

"There is something or somebody in there, somewhere; I don't know what," she excitedly replied. "I just got a glimpse of it as it fell off that ledge of rock," pointing to the opposite side of the creek, where the mountain-side came down rather abruptly to the water's edge. A few feet from the bottom was a narrow ledge of rock, just wide enough to give passage to a pedestrian.

"Maybe it was a rock falling down the mountain-side."

"No, it wasn't a rock; a rock couldn't scream the way it did, whatever it was."

"Maybe some one's fallen——"

"There it is!" Jessie cried, pointing. "Over there! It's a man's head or a boy's—just sticking out of the water a little, between those rocks! See it? What shall we do?" wringing her hands. "Shall I jump in?"

"No, don't! I'll go in," he expostulated hurriedly, removing his coat and making ready to go into the water.

"Wait!" the other cautioned, stopping the youth just in time to prevent him taking a bath. "Let's cross over those stones to the other side; then we can get him out without you going into the water."

"Well, hurry then!" Bill started jumping from rock to rock, with Jessie following, until they reached the opposite side, where the head lay exposed between the rocks. At length they succeeded in getting the boy—for such it proved to be, a boy of perhaps eleven years—on dry ground. A fish-basket hung over one shoulder.

"I wonder if he's dead or alive!" Jessie exclaimed.

"I don't know; he doesn't seem very lively," was Bill's solemn remark. They both stood looking down at the unconscious, water-soaked child, who lay as if in death. "What shall we do?"

"Stand him on his head!" Jessie suggested quickly. "Maybe some of the water will run out."

Bill, not knowing what else to do, stooped and lifting the boy, stood him on his head.

"Squeeze him!" Another order from Jessie.

Bill squeezed him.

"That's the way they do when people are drowned, or nearly so I mean," Jessie corrected herself.

"I'm afraid he's dead," muttered Bill. Jessie's experiments failed to restore the lad.

"Put him down!" Another command from

Jessie. "I don't know what else we possibly can do; do you?"

"I think perhaps we had better carry him up into the sunshine; that might revive him. This shady place never will."

"Well, come on."

So together they managed to carry the boy, Bill taking the upper part of the body and Jessie the feet, until they reached the road by the bridge. Then Jessie said: "Put him down a minute; I must rest; I'm not strong like you are."

Thus they dropped the inert body on the grass by the roadside, until the girl was sufficiently rested to continue; after which they gathered their burden up and stumbled along, over the bridge, and up the road, until they reached the cross-roads again.

"I can't go any further," gasping, out of breath. "Put him down here in the sun; and if he don't come to I can't help it. I've done all I can do."

After selecting a sunny spot, they again placed the boy on the grass by the roadside, and stood looking down at him, not knowing whether he was dead or alive.

"I hope he'll come to all right," said Bill solemnly. "I hate to see anyone die." It reminded him of another dead boy that he had gazed upon—what seemed years ago. "It seems to me that my life is besieged with dead people, just as yours is with murderers," he added softly, stooping and

removing the fish-basket from the boy's shoulder.

"Why? What other dead people have you had to deal with?"

The former quickly saw his mistake, but in answering said: "W-well, the dead man in the cabin."

"He wasn't dead though."

"I know, but it seems as though he was."

"Well, what others?" Jessie spoke as though she expected to hear of at least a dozen others.

"T-hat's all," he stammered. Bill felt that it was best not to tell of all the dead people that he had come in contact with.

"Well, then there ain't any, because this one ain't dead yet—at least I don't think he is. So you can't keep up with me after all."

Meanwhile time was passing and nothing was being done to help the unfortunate lad.

"There's a mark on his forehead. I guess he's only stunned. Don't you think so?"

"Yes, if he ain't drowned along with it."

"If we could only get him over by the mill, some one over there might know what to do," with a sigh, eager to do all she could for the unfortunate lad.

"If we only had a horse, we could put the boy on his back, and take him somewhere—I don't know just where though; it's a long way to the mill."

"Why didn't we think to bring Dolly?" Jessie interrupted.

"It's no use to wish for things, Jessie," the other thoughtfully added.

"There's that cow over there in the pasture where we were a while ago," the thoughtful girl suggested. "I wonder if she would mind?"

"No, Jessie. You couldn't do anything with a cow."

"Well, we might try. She might do it when she finds out what the trouble is."

"I'm afraid it would be useless. He seems to be dead anyhow; he doesn't move at all."

"Well, come; if he's dead, we may as well go along home; it's getting late. I've done all I could."

"No, you can't go away and leave him, even if he is dead. That wouldn't be right."

"Look, quick! He opened his mouth; he wants to say something! Oh! if we could only do something!"

"Tell me what to do and I'll do it," Bill replied sorrowfully. "If somebody would only come along!"

"I'll get the cow, anyway, and we'll see what we can do with her. I'd rather be doing something than standing here; then we'll feel better." Thus she started down the road, as fast as she could go, and after crossing the bridge disappeared behind the trees that bordered the pasture.

A few minutes later the youth saw the cow come up from the pasture and slowly cross the bridge, his friend following.

"Go along, Boss; go along, Boss!" he could hear her saying to the cow, as she crossed the bridge. Boss advanced nicely, but very slowly and deliberately—she certainly believed in taking her time—chewing her cud as she advanced.

"She's a poky old thing. I had a hard time to get her to come at first," calling when she was within hailing distance; "but finally I ran over where she was in the pasture and I said, 'Go along Boss!' as though I meant it; then she started."

"She's comin' all right," he called back hopefully. "Isn't she a big cow though? I don't believe I ever saw such a big cow."

"Yes," was the quick response. "But now that I've got her started, can we ever stop her?"

"I'll stop here when she gets here. Whoa, Boss!" he said, a moment later when the cow had finally reached the desired spot. Boss very obligingly stopped, and stood there quietly chewing her cud.

"Good!" Jessie approved, as she also stopped. "Now I believe we shall have no further trouble. She seems so gentle and nice. I'm glad I thought of her."

"She may do it," doubtfully.

"Now, shall I get on first, or will you?"

"Jessie!" in amazement. "I hope you don't think we're all going to ride!"

"Why not? Not that I'm anxious to; but somebody's got to go along; you can't send him off



alone; he'd fall off. If you've got a better plan, why, all right. When there's a man around I believe in lettin' him run things."

"I was going to put the boy on the cow's back, and walk along beside and hold him on. You never could ride a cow."

"Maybe that'll do just as well," she replied, satisfied. "But one time, when we were going to school, an old cow came along—if I'm not mistaken, this is the same one—and a lot of us got on her and had a ride. She didn't——"

"Don't stop to tell it now! Let's do something with this boy!"

"Oh, yes. How is he—any better?"

Both turned around from the cow to see how the boy was. He still lay quietly on the grass, just as they had left him, with a deathlike pallor on his childish face.

"We must do something quick," Jessie advised, "or he will surely die. Is he gettin' any warmer? If he is, he may live; if he gets colder, he's dying. Feel him."

The other stooped and felt the boy's face, then his hands. "He's cold as ice," was the disappointing reply.

"Then he's dead," the girl concluded. "We can't do anything. I'll take the cow back. No! Look! He opened his eyes; he can't be dead. Let's put him on the cow's back. I hope she won't start to kick when we put him on."

"That's just what I'm afraid of," Bill agreed,

rising to his feet and looking again toward the cow, which stood quietly chewing her cud in the center of the road. "I never could do anything with a cow; they always get to kicking or running, whenever I tried to do anything with them."

"I don't believe she'll kick," was the optimistic response. "She stands so quietly."

"You never can tell, though," hesitatingly. "A cow's the most uncertain of animals; you can't tell what minute she may go chasing off down the road. I don't believe we'd better try it."

"Why not? It won't hurt to try."

"Well, all right." Bill again stooped to gather the boy in his arms and place him on the cow's back.

"Wait!" abruptly came from his companion. "I'm going to get that rope over there on that tree, and put it around the cow. Then we'll have something to hold her with—in case she runs."

"Yes; that's a good idea. I'll go and get it." So he ran to the tree, and, after untying the rope, returned and fastened it around the cow's horns. Then he went over where the boy lay and picked him up. Jessie took the rope to hold the cow, in case she started to run. Bill placed the boy very carefully, so as not to frighten her. Everything went nicely. The eager girl stood in front of the cow holding the rope.

"Jessie," the youth cried, as he stood holding the drooping child on the animal's back. "Don't

stand in front of her; she may take a notion to run any minute."

"Never mind! If she runs, I'll run, too," she returned, fearlessly. "Have you got him fixed?"

"Yes," was the response, as he finally arranged the boy on the cow's back to the best of his ability, and holding him to keep him from falling off. Boss offered no objection whatever, as she stood perfectly motionless, except for the rhythmical movement of her lower jaw.

"Now, if you're ready, we better get started. Go easy with her."

"All right, I'm ready. No, wait! There's the basket; I'll get it," stooping to pick up the boy's fish-basket.

"Never mind it," the other answered, provokingly. "We've got enough already."

"Yes, I'll get it; I can just as well take it as not. I'll hang it down my back." So she, after picking up the basket, placed the strap over her head, allowing the basket to hang down her back. Then she quickly took hold of the rope again.

"Now hurry, Jessie; whenever you're ready, start her along," the youth expostulated.

"I'm ready; and I'm anxious to see how this thing's going to turn out."

"Well, go ahead."

"Now, which way shall we go?"

Bill made no reply, but was busy thinking, with an undecided expression on his face.

"We never can go over the hill, with all this

performance; if we go around the hill, it's so far the boy would surely die before we ever get there; if we go to the left, I don't know where we'd go to. I haven't been out there much."

"I don't see much choice. Let's do something; then we'll feel better satisfied."

"I'm goin' straight ahead; then we won't have to turn around. Besides, that looks like the best road." Thus the girl proceeded to start the cow ahead—to the left, on the unknown road. "Come, Boss!" she cried, giving the rope a pull. "Come, Boss!" But Boss would not come. "Come, I say!" she repeated, giving the rope another violent pull; but Boss would not budge an inch. She quietly and calmly stood, just as she had done through it all, with eyes almost closed, and still chewing her cud.

"What shall we do?" Bill asked. "She won't come."

"Go behind and push her, while I pull," his companion shouted—she was getting vexed. "Sometimes, when you can't start a cow from the front, you can from the back; so we'll have her, whichever way it is."

"I can't! I'm afraid if I leave him, he'll fall off." Bill had the boy astride the cow, with the upper part of his body leaning forward.

"I can't help it. We've got to get started some way. It'll be midnight before we get home, if we don't get started soon."

The former left the boy's side, and went behind

the cow and pushed, while the girl pulled in front; but all to no avail. For all the old cow cared, they may have been a hundred miles away.

"It's no use," he finally said, returning to the boy's side to again support him. "She won't go."

"Come, Boss; come, Boss!" Jessie continued, jerking the rope violently with both arms. I don't see how I ever got her to come this far, so easy; she's such a mule." With that she dropped the rope from her hands entirely. "Besides, I feel water running down my back from somewhere."

"It's that basket! Take it off!" her friend commanded, severely. "Don't you know it's been in the river?"

"I guess I will," she replied, quickly, also stopping and removing the strap from over her head. "Where shall I put it?" She looked around, wondering what to do with the basket.

"Leave it here!" Bill ordered.

"No, I won't! I'm not coming clear back after this basket. I'll put it here." "Here" meant the cow's horn, where she hung the basket.

"Be careful, or you'll scare her!"

"I don't think there's much danger," she responded, softly. "How's the boy?"

"I think he's improvin'," was the encouraging replied. "He's getting warmer," after examining the boy.

"If we could only get started!" Jessie again took hold of the rope for another try. "If I only

could get her to stop chewing for a minute, I think I could get her to start."

"There—now she's stopped!" he exclaimed, a minute later.

"Come quick!" abruptly came from Jessie, as she gave the rope a violent jerk; but for once she was not quick enough. The cow had already received a fresh supply, and was quietly chewing again.

Just then the boy moved.

"He's getting better. I think, if we wait, whoever this cow belongs to will come; it's milking time now."

"You can wait, if you want to; but I'm goin' to make this cow move, if I have to kick her." Jessie never liked to give up when once she undertook a task. "Here, stick her with this." She produced a pin from her dress and handed it to Bill.

"No, Jessie; you may start her to kicking, if you do that," he cautioned.

"Well, let her kick. Anything's better than having her stand there like a frozen image."

"Look! Some one's coming," the youth cried, gladly, looking down the road. His companion turned and did likewise. A man was slowly and deliberately walking up the unknown road "Coming much the same as the cow had come," Bill thought, as he watched the man slowly advancing toward them, "even to the chewing."

"What is the trouble?" the man asked, calmly,

when he saw the boy sprawled over the cow's back.

"We found this boy in the creek," Jessie answered, quickly. "He fell in and was nearly drowned. We're trying to get him—somewhere."

"Why, it's Harry," the man replied, unmoved, coming closer and lifting the boy to an upright position. The man, to all outward appearances, was as unaffected as though nothing had happened to his child. "He should have been home long ago with the cow; and, wondering what delayed him, I came along to see."

"Papa," suddenly came from the boy's lips. All were pleasantly surprised. The boy could speak; there was no further need for alarm.

"I am much obliged to you for doing what you have done," the man drawled, as if it were too much trouble to speak. "You have done everything just right. The children often, when they have been fishing, upon bringing the cow home from pasture, hang their fish-baskets over the horns—just as you have done—and then all pile on and ride home. Sometimes they even drape her with ferns. You can do anything in the world with her."

"She seems real gentle," Bill ventured.

"Oh, yes; we're ALL just like that," with emphasis on the "all," as if the cow were one of the family.

"Yes; but we can't make her GO." Jessie spoke with much vexation.

"Oh, yes," the man replied, decidedly; "she'll go without any trouble. All you have to do is to say, 'Go along, Boss!'"

"I'll try it," Jessie abruptly said. "Go along, Boss! Go along, Boss!" And with that "Boss," very slowly, of course, and deliberately, walked off down the road, with the fish-basket dangling over one horn, the rope from the other, and the boy on her back, the latter having recovered sufficiently to enjoy his homeward ride.

"Oh!" Jessie suddenly exclaimed. "That's the way I got her here in the first place. Don't you remember? I told her to 'Go along!' I've been wonderin' through it all, how I got her to move in the first place." Yes, Boss had been true to her nature; she had been educated "to go" and not "to come."

Then the man, after thanking them again, slowly followed down the road at the same deliberate pace in which he had come.

"Now, you see my plan was best, after all. If we had hung the basket on her horn in the first place, and all piled on, as I said, and told her to go along, we should have had no further trouble. I should never have thought of the ferns, though; but perhaps we would have got along just as well without them. Now, I believe that's the same cow we used to ride at school. I don't see how she ever got away over here, though."

"Come, Jessie; we must hurry. It'll be dark long before we get home." The sun had already



sunk behind the distant trees, and was not far from its setting. The cool of the evening was coming on, and the two were many miles from home. Bill turned, ready to start. "I guess he'll be all right now," he said, gladly.

"Yes," Jessie said, still watching the departing procession. "I told you he was only stunned."

Bill wished that such another case of "stunning" had turned out as pleasantly. "Come, Jessie. Why don't you come?"

"Wait! I want to see them go around the hill first. Why, do you know, one time at school a boy was stunned by a baseball, and he was unconscious for eight hours. Everybody thought he was dead, for a long time; but he recovered all right. Come, now." She turned just as the cow and boy disappeared around the hill, and was ready to start. "Which way shall we go?"

"We'll go over the hill; don't stop to argue. The sun's nearly set now."

So they hurried off up the same road they had come in the morning, as fast as they could go.

"I can't see but what everything's turned out very nicely," Jessie said, pleasingly. "If granny don't have a fit before I get home."

"We'll get there as fast as we can," was the hopeful reply, as he started with long strides up the hill.

They had only gone a few paces, though, when Jessie suddenly stopped short. "Wait!" she said, abruptly. And with that she turned and started

running back in the direction whence they had so lately come, as fast as her legs could carry her.

"Jessie!" Bill called after her, provokingly.  
"What are you going to do now?"

"I MUST get my drink," she called back over her shoulder, as she sped toward the creek.

## XVI.

## THE REAL ANARCHIST.

"I had a caller today," Jessie called to her friend, as he came up from the mill. She was waiting at the fork for him, after her afternoon walk, gathering flowers.

"Who?" he asked, as they started up the hill together.

"A young gentleman. Ahem! A very, very brave young gentleman," smiling.

"Joe?"

"Yes. Ha! ha!" She evidently considered it as quite a joke. "I'll tell you about it: I was sitting on the front porch this afternoon, reading, when I happened to look down where we can see the road coming up the hill. I saw a man riding in a cart up the hill; I wondered who it could be. Just as he turned into the gateway, I saw who it was. I quickly went inside, and shut the door. Looking out of the window, I saw him tie his horse to the ring on the corner of the barn, and then he started toward the house. I sat down in a chair near the door to wait for him. In a few seconds I heard him rapping on the door. I sat quietly, and let him knock, three times; then I got up to

go to the door; but I no sooner reached my feet than the door opened, and he stood in the doorway. If he'd come a second sooner, he'd found me seated peacefully in the chair, gazing at the door. Ha! ha!

" 'How do you do?' he said, with one of those lordly bows of his. I thought he would sweep the floor with his hat. I bowed stiffly. 'I—I forgot something,' he said, 'when I left in such a hurry, and I've come to get it, if you'll let me look in the room.' Now, I know well enough that there was nothing left; I've thoroughly cleaned the room. Anyway, I told him to go and look in the room, if he wanted to. I thought it would be a good way to get rid of him.

" 'Well, I'll sit down and talk a little first; you must be lonely up here alone. Is that boy here yet?' I said that there was no one here besides ourselves, except a young man who works at the sawmill; and, what's more, I also said that there had been no boys here since HE left, except a little fellow of five. Then he started to enter; but I got in the way. 'Go and get what you left, first, and then you can return,' I said, as though I meant it.

" 'So he left and went to his room; but soon returned, without even entering the cabin. When he got back I had completely disappeared. Ha! ha!' At this Jessie leaned forward in order that she might the better relieve her feelings. "He came back on the porch, and, after rapping on

opened the door and walked in—only to find me—gone! After a little he came out on the porch again, and sat down—doubtless to admire our beautiful scenery; then he got up and went to his cart, climbed in and drove off, down the hill. I saw the whole thing from my window upstairs.

“Then I came down stairs, and sat on the porch to resume my reading, where I had been interrupted. I got there just in time to see him driving along below the hill. Then he disappeared; I don’t know what could have become of him. I hoped that some of those things got him—whatever you called them.”

“Anarchists,” Bill answered. “Joe came down to the mill, Jessie. That’s why you didn’t see him go down the road. He came to tell me about the man that was arrested.”

“Oh, did he? What did he say?”

“He wasn’t the man in the cabin at all. This man couldn’t speak a word of English; and Joe said that the man in the cabin spoke good English. None of us thought of that, the other day, when he was arrested.” Bill smiled. “So, now, nobody knows who the man in the cabin could have been. Joe’s come up to investigate.”

“I wonder who it could have been?” Jessie asked, curiously. “I’d give most anything to know.”

Meanwhile, having ascended the hill and entered the vineyard, the two paused before Bill’s cabin to finish their conversation.

"Do you want to go for a walk after supper?" Jessie asked, friendly, of Bill. "If so, I'll hurry supper. I only had a short walk this afternoon, and it's grand today."

"Yes, I'll go," was the cheerful reply, as he turned toward his cabin.

So, accordingly, after supper, Jessie and her guest started for a walk, through the woods, at the close of a glorious summer day.

"I've got something to tell you," Jessie commenced.

"What is it?"

"Something you won't like; I don't, either."

"Tell me, anyway."

"I'm goin' away again," sadly.

"To your sister?"

"No; I'm goin' further than that. I'm goin' for good this time. I'm afraid you'll never see me again."

Bill looked serious. "Has you father sold the vineyard?"

"Oh, no, not that; but I'm going away to school. Father says I need to get civilized. Besides, he says I've been real good, so if I want to, I can go away to school. Sister's comin' up here to live, so I won't be needed so much now. She gets so lonely down there she can't stand it alone. My brother-in-law can get off the train here just as well as down there, so it won't make any difference to him. I hate to go; but then I'll always come home Friday and stay until Sunday."

"Where are you going to?" was the eager question.

"I'm going to the Santa Cruz High School. Father's goin' to take me down Sunday; then I'm going to stay with some friends of his that live down there. But, say, ain't you going back to school, when it opens."

"I—I'm afraid not." That was out of the question. "I'll have to work. If you come home Friday, I'll see you again, though."

"That's so!" Jessie responded, gladly, as she hurried up the back steps into the kitchen, with the other following. "I didn't think of that."

Sunday morning came all too soon, for those concerned in Jessie's departure for school. It was a beautiful morning, clear and cool, with a light breeze blowing from the coast. The low-lands, far below, toward the water-front, were hidden with a thick fog that had come in from the ocean. As Bill sat on the front porch looking at the scene before him, it reminded him of a great ocean, with the mountain tops dotted about like islands.

Soon Jessie came down, carrying her basket, ready for her journey. "I'm ready to go," she said, sadly, as she stood in the doorway, with her basket in one hand and her coat over the other arm. "I feel as if I were going away forever, instead of only five days."

"I'm sorry to have you go," Bill returned. "I think your father's waiting, Jessie. Shall I carry your basket out to the cart?" He arose, and,

taking her traveling case, started toward the barn, where Mr. Anderson, having already harnessed the horse, stood waiting for his daughter.

"I'll be along in a minute," she replied, "as soon as I have a last look at everything."

A few minutes later, the girl sat beside her father in the cart, and, after a last sad farewell to Bill and her grandmother, who had also come out to witness the departure, Jessie left for the city by the sea.

They had only gone a little way when she turned around and called to Bill, who was still standing, watching the departure:

"If you find out to whom the gun belongs, let me know."

"All right, Jessie!"

After the cart with its occupants disappeared beyond the gateway, Bill turned and slowly strayed toward the cabin; he knew not what else to do. He went inside, and sat down on his chair. He already began to feel lonely. His friend had gone to school, the very school he would give so much to be able to return to the following day. But that would be impossible; he might as well have wished that his awful mistake had not been made, as to wish that he might return to school. Then his loneliness grew, as he thought more and more of "poor Tom" and his cruel mistake. It was wretched; he could not endure it. Jumping up, he grabbed his hat and went outside. Perhaps, if



he took a walk somewhere through the bright sunshine, he would feel better.

The heartsick youth went plunging down the hill, on down, past the mill, to the creek-bed. But the feeling was the same; nothing could ever undo that. He sighed. Then he went on and on, stumbling over the rocks, till he had gone half a mile down along the creek. Tired, he sat down upon a rock to rest. Oh, but it was awful—to think and think about it, the rest of his days. The little stream went past him moaning and groaning, as if to add to his misery. The songsters were busy in the tree-tops, but it was only a dirge that they sang. Why could not they have sung something cheerful? And the little mountain flowers, on every hand, only drooped their heads, as if they would feel with him.

Then the poor boy bent over, and, hiding his face in his hands, began to sob: "I never can stand it here; I must go away. If it hadn't been for Jessie, I never could have stood it this long. Yes, I'll go away." He lifted his head, as if a new thought had suddenly come to him. "I believe I'll go back and give myself up; it wasn't the right thing to do, to run away like that—it was cowardly. I'll give myself up, and then I'll feel better, even if I am locked up."

He stood up suddenly, as if to go; then he sat down again, as if not knowing what he was doing, and again put his face in his hands.

"Hello, Bill!" Was that a voice? He raised his head and listened.

"Hello, Bill!" Yes, it was the voice of some one he had known long ago. Oh, but it was terrible to have such things happen. Or was he losing his mind?

"Oh, Bill! Ain't that you?" The bushes rustled.

He stood up, horrified, and turned in the direction whence the voice had seemed to come. It was worse than ever. Did he believe in ghosts, or was it in the resurrection of the dead?

"What's the matter with you? Why don't you speak? Nice way you treated the bunch—going away and never saying a word to any of us where you were going. What's the matter, anyway?"

"Tom!" Bill gasped, almost inaudibly.

"Well!" the voice again.

"Tom! Is that really you!" A change came over the face of the mistaken youth—a look of relief.

"I believe it is." Tom advanced toward Bill. "What are you acting so queer about, anyhow? You look as if you'd seen a ghost!"

"Tom, are you really alive? I thought you was dead."

"Thought I was dead!"

"Yes. I thought I killed you."

"Thought you killed me! When?"

"That night when we had the fight."

"Did we ever have a fight? I don't remember

it if we did. I always thought we got along just fine together."

"Don't you remember the night we played cards, and you called me a cheat, and then we fought?"

It was all so plain to Bill that he could not quite understand Tom's indifference.

"NOW I remember! So that was why you went away, was it? I've been wonderin' all summer why you went off like that. Yes, now I remember all about it; but I really didn't mean it. You didn't need to have got mad about it, Bill."

"I didn't get mad. You were the one that got mad. You rushed at me with your bat, and——"

"Did I?" Tom interrupted. "So I did."

"When you started at me with your bat," Bill continued, "I held the chair up to protect myself; then I tripped over the blanket and fell, with you under the chair. Do you remember?"

"Yes, I remember all that—now that you speak of it; but I don't remember getting killed!"

"Well, of course, you wouldn't remember that part of it. You probably were knocked unconscious for a while. I picked you up and put you on the bed, and covered you up with that confounded blanket, which caused all the trouble. I did everything I could for you, Tom, after which I listened, and I couldn't hear your heart beat, and you lay there so quiet—I never saw you so quiet before, Tom; so I made up my mind you were dead."

"Maybe I was! Did you ever hear of a dead person coming back to life, Bill?"

"Yes, Tom, I have!" Bill honestly replied. "People have been dying—or nearly so—around me all summer, and then coming back to life again; and yet I never once thought that you could have done likewise. That night, when I covered you up with that blanket, I thought, just as sure as anything, that you were dead."

"I remember now, Bill, the next morning, when I woke up, I wondered why I went to bed with all my clothes on; I couldn't seem to remember about things. I was glad enough; for once I didn't have to dress."

"You've caused me a lot of trouble, Tom."

"Did I?" Tom said, sorrowfully. "Well, I didn't mean to. Forgive me, Bill, won't you?" Tom put forth his hand, and soon the two were fast friends again.

"It's all right, Tom. Now that I've got you back, I feel so good again." He gave a deep sigh of relief.

Things seemed different then. Everything was bright and beautiful—the sunshine, the trees and the flowers. The sound of the water rushing among the rocks came to his ears like sweet music, and the birds were singing as if their souls were filled with gladness. It was like a great anthem, with a host of angels singing.

Bill looked around at the beauties he had failed to notice until that moment. A bluejay was calling

saucily from a tall redwood. Was it the same impudent fellow that he had heard so often that summer? This time he seemed to be laughing. The flowers, too, had raised their heads and seemed to be smiling. Bill looked at Tom. Tom was laughing. Then the joyful youth, himself, relieved from his long suffering, joined in, and the two boyish voices rang out loudly, until they echoed and re-echoed through the canyon—and all over a mistake. Oh, but it did seem good again to laugh—the laugh of care-free youth.

“There’s one thing more, Tom,” Bill continued, when they could laugh no more, “that I simply must tell you; I should have died this summer if it hadn’t been for one thing.”

“And what’s that?” his companion asked, curiously.

“If it hadn’t been for Jessie—a girl where I am staying.”

“Ain’t she the classiest, though! Can’t she spiel!” came from Tom, eagerly.

Bill looked at Tom in amazement. “Why, where did you ever see Jessie?”

“Wasn’t I up there?”

“When?”

“One day.”

“Was you, Tom? Tell me about it.”

“Well, you see, one day, a few weeks ago, I came up here fishing, and I got lost. I never can tell where I am when I come up here in these mountains. So I went up to the top of a hill where

I saw a house. I thought maybe if I got up high I might be able to see where I was. When I got up there, there was the girl you speak of. I liked her fine, too, Bill. She showed me around, and told me everything about the place. I had lunch there. She was so nice that I thought I would give her what fish I had; I didn't want them, anyhow. She said she'd be glad to have them. Before I went she showed me the winery, and told me how they make the wine, and when I was goin' she asked me to come again. Well, I'm comin' up here for a month next summer, just to hear that girl spiel."

"So that was you that brought the fish that day, was it?" Bill remarked, doubtfully. "And, Tom, there's one thing more I want to ask you."

"Ask away," was the apparently unconcerned reply.

"Did you say anything to Jessie about being a banker's son?"

"I think I did."

"Well, is that true? Are you?"

"I think I am."

"Tom, was your father a banker? You never told me if he was."

"Well, I don't tell you everything I know."

"But, Tom, why didn't you tell me?"

"How could I tell you when I didn't know; I only just found it out myself. I've told everybody that I've seen; if you'd been round, I'd have told you. Besides, it ain't my uncle's bank at all; it's

MY bank. He's only looking after it till I'm old enough to do it."

"How did you find this out?"

"I went up to the city to visit my uncle this vacation, and one day I heard him talking about it when he didn't know I was there. I don't see why he never told me about it?"

"Probably he thought you were too young, Tom."

"Besides the bank, I've got a lot of houses and business blocks, Bill," he whispered. "I heard my uncle say that when I'm twenty-one I'll have a million. Think of it, Bill." Tom's face was beaming with the thoughts of it all.

"Good, Tom!" Bill gladly replied. "Now you can give me a job. Will you?"

"All right, old man; when I get it, you shall have your job."

"And, say, Tom; there's one thing more I want to ask you: Did you drink a glass of wine at the winery that day?"

"I—I don't remember." Tom looked at his feet.

"Tom!" This was very decided.

"I think I did," he acknowledged, raising his eyes.

"You should have refused. You oughtn't to drink it, Tom!"

"Well, I did refuse," he acknowledged indignantly, "and then she said, 'Well, if you don't mind, I'll just take a drop for myself.' Then I said, 'Well, I guess I'll take a little, too!'" Tom,

evidently, was not going to be outdone by a girl.

"If I were you I wouldn't touch it, Tom."

"I'm not going to again. Besides, she said it wasn't so bad unless it came out of a bottle," he said, smilingly.

"I know, Tom; that's what she thinks; but, for my part, I can't see what the bottle's got to do with it."

"Nor I, Bill. There's not much in a bottle; not when it's empty, eh, Bill?" Both laughed at Tom's attempt at being funny.

"Besides, Bill, I believe she gave me too much," Tom continued, after their laugh was over. "That day, coming down the hill, I couldn't tell where I was going. When I tried to go one way, I'd find myself going some other way. I had to sit down and rest for a while, for fear I'd go over the cliff."

"Don't you touch any more of it, if it affects you like that!" Bill ordered, severely. "Remember, Tom!"

"I'm not going to. I've made up my mind to that."

"Now, Tom," Bill asked, anxiously. "Tell me. Whatever brought you up here again today?"

"Well," Tom began, "that day I was up here before I came to fish, and I also brought my gun—I thought I might want it. I brought a blanket as well, thinking I might possibly stay all night somewhere. I'd always had an idea that I'd like to stay in the mountains all night once—to see what



it was like after dark; and also so I could be here early in the morning, to fish, before some one else had them all caught up. Aunt Amy said I wouldn't like it when it got dark; but I came, anyway. Well, you see, as I told you before, I got lost, and, after going up on the hill, the girl told me which road to take; but after I came down I wandered around till I got lost again.

"When it was nearly night I came to a place where there were some little cottages built among the trees, and, as I saw no one around, I concluded that I might just as well stay there as not. So I went through all of them to see which suited me the best; finally, I decided on the second, as the door both front and back could be locked.

"The first thing that I did was to take particular pains to see that both doors were well locked. Now, notice what I say, Bill; I locked both doors. Then I sat down in the chair for a while, and ate some things I'd brought along in my basket. Now, Bill, I wasn't a bit scared, but when it grew dark I got kind o' lonely, and wished I hadn't come. Aunt Amy was right; I didn't like it. But I was there, and couldn't get away; so I concluded the best thing would be to go to sleep. But I said to myself, 'Never again!'

"Then I selected one of the bunks—they were horrible things, though, and I began to think of 'bed-bugs.' But I couldn't help it, though. So, wrapping myself up in the blanket, I lay down and tried to sleep. I had the hardest time, though;

I couldn't get fixed, and then I had nothing for a pillow but my fish-basket. I had a horrible time; I got to thinkin' of you and wonderin' whatever became of you. I wished you'd been there; then I wouldn't have minded a bit. It was horribly quiet; then once a tree fell down and nearly smashed my cottage."

"No, Tom," Bill interrupted, "that was only a branch that fell, and it struck one of the other cabins. Go on with your story."

"Where was I, anyway?"

"You were trying to go to sleep."

"Oh, yes. I was trying to go to sleep, and the harder I tried to go to sleep the more I woke up. Once I thought I heard a noise; I sat up and listened. Now, Bill, I'll tell you what happened. I never exactly believed in ghosts; but now I do. Just as I sat up the door unlatched, in spite of the fact that I had it locked, and slowly opened itself. Now, Bill, I think I could have stood that; but when it slowly closed and latched itself again, with a sharp click, it was too much for me. I didn't mean to, but I just naturally went—out of the back door and up the hillside as tight as I could go. I'd have been goin' yet, if I hadn't tripped over a stump and skinned my shins."

"So that was you, then, that went up that hill so lively," Bill again interrupted. "I might have know no one could run that fast but you."

"What do you know about it, I'd like to know?" Tom asked, with an astonished look on his face.

"I was there, Tom, and heard you. It was Joe, a friend of mine, who opened that door and then shut it again. He was looking for some one."

"Was it? Why didn't you say so. I thought sure it was a ghost. Aunt Amy tried to make me think it was the wind; but I knew no wind could ever do that stunt."

"It's too bad, Tom, we didn't know it was you; it would have saved us a lot of trouble. We've been wondering all along who it could have been."

"But how could Joe—as you call him—open the door when I had it locked?"

"Perhaps the lock didn't hold. Those doors are old and worn out."

"Maybe you're right. Now, today I've come up to get my things before school opens. I found the cabin all right; but my things are gone. Somebody has run off with them. While I was waitin' till time to catch my train, I thought I'd run down to the creek and see how the fish are doing, and here I find you. Are you coming back to school tomorrow?"

"Yes, Tom, I may as well," Bill smiled, brightly.

"Now that I've got so much money I think I'll get my uncle to let you have enough to finish school."

"No, Tom; I have plenty. I've been working at the mill all summer. Besides I prefer to make my own way entirely."

"Working! Have you?" Tom exclaimed, eagerly. "So have I been working!"

"What!" Bill was dumfounded. "You been working!"

"I've been working," Tom repeated, as if to verify his former statement.

"What have you been doing?"

"What have I been doing! I've been cutting the lawn; I've been making the fire; I've been bringing in the wood. I've been doing everything, just as you said, Bill—cleaning up the yard, sweeping the walk, feeding the hens, and getting the eggs. I asked Aunt Amy if I might, and she said I could. I like to get the eggs; I just get curious to know how many there will be; sometimes I have to go ahead of time to see how many I'm going to get."

"That's fine, Tom! I'm glad to hear you've been working." However, Bill was never so surprised in his life.

"Oh, yes," he continued; "I helped Aunt Amy with the weeding one day; I only cut one plant, and she said that didn't matter—she often did that herself."

"Good for you, Tom."

"Aunt Amy says," Tom continued, proudly, "Bill, I leave it to Aunt Amy—she says that I'm just doing FINE!"

"I'm awful glad to hear it, Tom," Bill approved. "You certainly are doing FINE!"

"I find work's not so bad as I imagined, after

you once get your hand in. Bank or no bank, Bill, I'm going to learn to work while I'm young. Then I am going to study more this year, too. I have a lot to learn if I'm going to run my bank when I get older; and I mean to do it—my mind is made up. I heard my uncle say I never would do it; but I'm going to show HIM if I'll ever run my own bank. When I make up my mind to do a thing I usually do it!" Tom was very much enthused over his new turn of mind.

"Yes, Tom; you can do it as well as anybody when you get a little older. But come now, if we are going to catch the afternoon train, we shall have to start. I must go to the mill, and see Mr. Bradley, and then to the vineyard and get my things."

So they turned to follow the same path back to the mill that Bill had come down earlier in the day. They had only taken a few steps when Bill, who was leading, stopped, and, turning to Tom, said, almost in a whisper: "Tom, don't you say anything to the other fellows about my horrible mistake, will you?"

"All right, Bill, old man, mum's the word. And—say, Bill, don't you say nothing, either!"

"What about, Tom? Oh, you mean about the bank?"

"No, not that. I'll tell that. I mean how I ran up the hillside that night. I didn't mean to do it."

And so it was agreed that neither boy would

tell on the other, after which the two continued their way through the bushes and scrambling over the rocks along the creek.

"I wonder what Aunt Amy will say," Tom called, "when she hears my things are gone. I went off in such a hurry that night that I didn't stop to get my things. Now, they're gone."

"No, Tom. Your things are at the mill. Mr. Bradley has them. He took them to care for them until we found out who the owner was."

"Good! I'm glad of that."

"And, say, Tom, there's one thing more I want to ask you," Bill said, softly, as they neared the silent mill.

"Ask away," was the unconcerned reply.

"Did you ever say anything about being an Anarchist to any one the night you were in the cabin?"

"I did."

"Well, what did you say?"

"I'll tell you. I didn't think of it before. When I went into the cabin that night, just after I had finished latching the doors, I heard something crackling around outside. I looked out of the window to see what it was, and there stood a horrible-looking critter. I pulled my head back quick before he could see me; but he must have seen me, for he called to know who I was, what I was doing there, where I had come from, and where I was going to. I just hollered back and told him it was none of his business. I didn't like

having such a critter around, if I was to stay there all night; so I thought I'd better get rid of him while I had the chance. I poked my gun out of the window and called to him to get away or I'd shoot his brains out. Then, Bill, I said I was an Anarchist, and that there was a lot more coming later, and as many other things as I could think of on the impulse of the moment, to make myself as desperate as possible. When I looked out of the window again he was chasing down the path I had come up on as fast as he could go. I was thankful to get rid of him so easy."

"Tom, that was Joe," Bill spoke, smilingly. "You had the life nearly frightened out of him."

"Was it? Was that Joe? Well, I wish now I had taken a shot at him, any way. It would have saved me lots of trouble later."

"Tom, you certainly have kept things stirred up this summer." Bill was so amused that he could control himself no longer. He burst out laughing. Tom joined him. When he could control himself again he looked at Bill, and with a broad grin said: "What do you know about that!"

## XVII.

## HOMEWARD BOUND.

The first thing the boys did upon reaching the mill was to look for Mr. Bradley. They soon found him sitting on his doorstep, smoking, and enjoying the beauties of the silent, peaceful Sunday forenoon. Bill quickly informed Mr. Bradley that he would like to stop work, in order that he might return to school on the following day. Mr. Bradley was sorry to hear Bill intended leaving, for he liked the youth much better than the ordinary millhand, and had found him to be a splendid worker. However, he arose from the doorstep, and retired within his cabin, returning a few minutes later with a check which he presented to Bill, who gladly placed it within his vest pocket, after thanking Mr. Bradley; then he told the foreman that the gun belonged to Tom, and asked if he could have it. Mr. Bradley looked at Tom very closely for a few moments, and before getting the gun Tom had to tell Mr. Bradley "what he knew about that," after which the foreman threw back his head and literally roared, until his gruff voice was thrown back to him from the mountain-side. It was the first time that Bill had ever seen the



morose character even crack a smile. After he he had done laughing he again retired to the cabin, and soon returned with the much-wondered-at gun, as well as the fish-basket.

"Where is my blanket, Bill?" Tom asked, after the other articles were safely in his possession.

"Tom!" Bill fairly gasped. "So that was your blanket. I might have known it—no wonder I felt sick that night in the cabin; it WAS the same blanket," he thought to himself. "Tom, some tramps got in that cabin the next night, and one of them carried your blanket away the next morning. Jessie saw him going down the road with it strapped over his shoulder. You'll have to let it go!"

"Tramps!" Tom repeated. "If I'd known that tramps lived there, you bet I'd never have gone into those cabins. Never again, Bill, do I stay here overnight."

"Come, Tom; we must hurry. I have to go and get my things, you know."

After bidding Mr. Bradley good-bye, the boys hurried away from the mill in the direction of the vineyard.

"Did you have a pole, Tom?" Bill asked, not yet having seen anything of the fishing-pole.

"Yes, Bill; but I lost it somewhere that day, before I went to the cabins. I put it down some place, and I've never been able to find it since. I don't care, though, as long as I've found my

gun. Have you got money enough to commence school with?"

"Yes, Tom. Then, if I get a job somewhere to work out of school hours, I'll get along nicely."

"Yes, Bill; you'll be going back to the store again as soon as school opens."

"I'm afraid not," was the solemn reply.

"Yes, Bill."

"No, Tom. I left there without saying anything. They wouldn't have me back. I'm sorry, too; I liked it real well."

"Yes, Bill. You'll have your place back. I've arranged for all that."

"You have, Tom?" he asked, incredulously. "How?"

"I'll tell you all about it, Bill, just as I remember it: The next morning after you left I was late waking up; I didn't feel so very good. I remember now—my head was sore. I wondered why I went to bed with all my clothes on. I couldn't remember about the fight then—I couldn't remember what we did. You were gone. First I thought you had gone off to the store; then I discovered your clothes were all gone. First I thought you had gone off mad, because I wasn't working. You know what you said?"

"Yes," Bill acknowledged.

"Then, Bill, I thought maybe you had gone off somewhere to work for the vacation—you said you might, where you could get more pay—and had left on the early train—the one that wakes me

up every morning when it goes past the house. Still, I wondered why you didn't leave a note, or write afterwards. I puzzled over it until my head ached, and I couldn't come to any conclusion that suited me. It was the same thing all vacation, Bill, wherever I went, or whatever I did; whether I was working, or fishing, or hanging around the Casino, it would be the same thing—I'd get to thinkin': 'Poor Bill! poor Bill! what ever became of him, anyway!' After I was up a little while I began to want my breakfast, and, as there was no one else to get it, I had to cook it myself."

"Did you, Tom?" Bill interrupted, curiously. "What did you have?"

"Eggs!" Tom answered, smiling. "I had the two broken eggs. I thought I better get them out of the way before Aunt Amy came home. I did everything just as you did, Bill. Lucky I watched you cook them the night before, wasn't it?"

"Did you have the bacon, too, Tom?"

"No; I was afraid if I tried any new wrinkles I might set the house on fire."

"You could have cooked it just the same as the eggs."

"Never mind; I had enough. I ate the potatoes; I ate them cold. I wasn't every hungry, any way, wonderin' about things. I did miss my cup of coffee, though. I'd just finished eatin', when I heard some one hammering on the front door. I went out to see who it was. It was a man from

the store; he wanted to know where you were. For a minute I couldn't think what to say. Then I told him—I had to say something—that you'd gone off to work for the vacation where you could get more pay. I told him that you'd gone off in such a hurry that you didn't have time to go around and tell them. Then I said that I was to have gone around and told them, but that I overslept that morning, and hadn't got round yet. I knew, Bill, you must have had some good reason for going; it wouldn't be like you to go off like that unless you had. So I just thought I'd make up something. I knew, Bill, wherever you were, you'd be working; I was right, too, wasn't I?" Tom looked pleased to think he had hit the nail on the head. "Then I told him you'd be back when school opened again; I knew you'd come back because you left your books. I was right, too, wasn't I? You are coming back, ain't you, Bill?" Tom was highly delighted to think how dextrously he had managed everything.

"Last night I was so sure that you'd come home that I went down to the evening train to meet you. That's why I waited until today to come up here; so you could come with me.

"Then, Bill, after I told the man from the store what I say, he looked at the ground; then he looked up and said he guessed it would be all right. He said he knew you too well not to know that you wouldn't go off in such a hurry, unless you had some good reason. He said he intended

paying you more for the vacation; but it was all right; he'd get somebody else until you came back; that he wanted you again, because you were the best he ever had to do things up about the store. So, you see, Bill, you can go back to the store again."

"All right, Tom!" Bill gladly exclaimed. "I'm awful glad of that. You've managed everything just fine!"

"After that I went out into the yard, and, not knowing what else to do, I climbed up in the apple tree, where we go when we want to talk. There I got thinkin' and thinkin', first about you and where you had gone. Then I got to thinkin' about you and what you said—that I was lazy and worthless and ought to learn to work. Then, Bill, right then and there in the apple tree, I made up my mind that I'd do it. So I came down, out of the tree, and went right to work. First, I fed the hens. I hadn't thought of them until then, and they were hungry. After that I cut the lawn, brought in the wood, and everything else—just as you said, Bill.

"After I had done everything just as I'd seen you do, I was hungry. I went inside wonderin' what I'd have for lunch—if it would be 'eggs'. Just then the door opened, and who should walk serenely in but Aunt Amy! It seems my uncle wasn't hurt as badly as they thought; so she came home. She wanted to know who'd been fixing things so nice. I said that I had, and she looked

pleased. When you didn't come home to lunch she asked where you were; so I told her the same thing that I did the store-man. I thought I better tell everybody the same thing, and I was right, too, wasn't I, Bill?" Again Tom smiled pleasingly.

By this time the boys had reached the vineyard. An hour later they were ready to leave, Bill having gathered together his belongings and packed them in his traveling-case, as well as bidding good-bye to his friends. Thus the boys retraced their foot-steps down the hill.

"How are you going to get out of this place, anyway?" Tom was lost again.

"Follow me, Tom? I know the way."

As they continued toward the station, along the winding road, sometimes rising, more often gently falling, at times the warm sunshine would beat strongly upon their backs; again they would pass through the cool, welcome shade of the mighty redwoods or other forest monarchs. On either hand, bordering the silent, country road were the dust-covered leaves of woodland plants, shrubs, trailing vines, grasses and tangled briars, amassed together, each struggling for supremacy; and like the great sea of humanity the strongest ever became the victors, unmindful of the weak. Beyond were the deep canyons, the sunny meadows, the checkered vineyards, or the thick forests. In the shadiest places beside some babbling brook bordered with mosses and grasses, kissed only

occasionally by a stray sunbeam, they would pass beds of pink oxalis, white forget-me-nots or bright yellow buttercups. And often while trudging along, their incessant chattering or fresh, boyish laughter would startle some squirrel or cottontail to scamper into the deeper woods for safety.

"The next day after you left," Tom eagerly continued, "I did everything different from what I planned. What is the use of plans? First, we went to church; then when we got home, who should be waiting at the gate but Uncle John in his car? He took lunch with us; afterwards he took us for a ride. We went up to the Big Trees. My! but it was fine! You should have been there and seen me climbing the trees!"

"No, Tom! You never could climb those trees!"

"What! Not the Cathedral, Bill!"

"Oh, of course you could climb around those trees—I did that myself."

"When was you there?"

"Only the day before you. I stopped over there on my way here." Bill thought back to the day he had visited the trees; it had been the hardest day of his life. How different it was now!

"The next day, Bill, when Uncle John returned to the city, who should go along but myself! I tell you it was fine riding along over the mountains with the trees and things looking at you! I was gone two weeks. It was while I was away that I found out about myself owning the bank. It's fine up here, isn't it?" he concluded, looking

around at the giant trees and the other wonders of the wooded mountains. "Do you have any trees like this back where you come from, Bill?"

"No, Tom. We have lots of nice things, but not trees like these."

"This is the place for me, Bill."

"Yes. I like it here, too."

"Here I intend to stay always."

"But you will have to go away when you begin to run your bank," Bill answered, pausing to see what Tom's reply to that would be.

"Not far, Bill. I will have a car like Uncle John, and I will come here when I like. I'm not goin' to work all the time," he uttered emphatically. "I shall live half here and half in the city."

"How can you do that—cut yourself in two?" Bill spoke smilingly.

"Bill, you are the funniest! Don't get me started again." A broad grin was spreading over Tom's face. When he could control himself, he added: "You know well enough what I mean. I shall live half of the TIME here, and half of the TIME at my bank. I believe in working half and playing half—that's my way."

"You're right. That's my way, too."

"Then why are you working all the time?"

"I can't help it now, while I'm going to school; but I'm not always goin' to. When I get through school I hope to have more spare time."

"Won't it seem good to get back to school again?" Tom at length said. "I mean to study



real hard this year. I will study quick and then I shall have plenty of time for games afterwards."

"That's the way, Tom."

"And, Bill, there's one thing I've been thinkin' as we've been walking along: I think we'd better not play cards quite so much this year; now that I see the harm that comes from it."

"You may do as you like," Bill replied determinedly, "but for my part I shall never touch another card. Tom, before my mother died, I promised her that I would never touch a card. I didn't keep my promise very well; but I shall now—always."

"I don't remember what I promised my mother, Bill; I was too small. But you seem to know what's best; so if you say so—I shall never play again."

"I can only speak for myself, Tom. You must decide for yourself. I shall never touch another card."

"Nor I, Bill."

"And, Tom, there's one thing more you need to do; I tell you for your own good: you need to control your temper."

"I know it. I've been thinking of that, too, as we're walking along. I know what I'll do, when I feel myself getting mad; I shall say to myself: 'Now, see here, Thomas, hadn't you better cut that right out?' And that will end it all."

"You have the right idea, Tom. All you need to do is to learn to control yourself."

For a few minutes they walked along in silence down the quiet mountain road; then Tom said:

"Bill, let's put our things down here and have a foot-race, down to that big tree and back. I haven't had a good run this vacation."

"All right, Tom." Bill was ready for anything; he was so glad to have Tom back again.

So the two boys placed their luggage by the roadside, after which Tom drew a line across the dusty road with his boot-toe, and both took their places in preparation for the coming race.

"Now ready, Bill! One! Two! Three! Go!" Both boys went chasing down the road with Tom in the lead, for the simple reason that he had started on "Three!" instead of "Go!"

"Are you coming?" he called back over his shoulder. But Bill made no reply; he was too busy.

"Go around the tree!" Tom called a minute later, as he still led the race toward the giant redwood.

He was the first to go around the tree, with Bill closely following. But on the home run, Bill, to show what he could do, gained on his companion, soon passed him, and thus reached the starting point first, with Tom only a step behind. Breathlessly the youths gathered up their traps in preparation to continue their way.

"You are better at it than I," Tom, between breaths, acknowledged.

Thus the two youths, with smiling, happy faces

continued along the mountain road, with the aged monarchs breathing down upon them their gentle blessings. They were happy; happy because they were together again and happy because they were going back to Santa Cruz and to school.

"Let's whistle 'something', Bill."

"All right, Tom."

Tom began to whistle "something," and Bill accompanied him; they whistled as only two happy boys can whistle. When they had finished their tune, Tom turned toward Bill and with his face beaming and his dark brown eyes sparkling, said:

"Doesn't it seem good, Bill, to be together again?"

"Yes, Tom; it DOES seem good."

In time they came to a mountain-top, and, looking down, there it all lay below them—Santa Cruz, "The City Beautiful."

## THE CITY BEAUTIFUL.

Santa Cruz, City of the Holy Cross, IS beautiful; perhaps not so much in itself as in its surroundings and in its balmy, salubrious climate—its cool summers and mild winters. It is true that there are days of heat, days of cold, days of wind, and days of fog in summer and rain in winter, and even frost (never snow); but is it not enough to know that there are no piercing blasts of winter, no sweltering heat of summer? Then there are the perfect days—the days when it seems that heaven and earth are one, when everything is just right—the warm sunshine the cloudless sky, the green grass and trees, the many-colored blossoms, the gay songsters and the buzzing bees. Sometimes these days come in June, sometimes in January.

And always the beautiful flowers; in the spring-time it seems as if they were everywhere; at other seasons, not so many, of course, but there are always some. Santa Cruz is famous for its beautiful roses; here in the gardens they may be gathered every day of the year.

Santa Cruz is world famous for its beautiful scenery. Some cities that lie on the sea coast

may boast of their beautiful harbors, or of the cliffs and sandy beaches; others may boast of their parks, or of their lakes, or their rivers; and still others may boast of their green, rolling hills or of rugged mountains that surround them. But Santa Cruz? She may boast of them all—the high mountains sloping downward, with their many ridges, and valleys between them; the deep canyons, always with a stream of purest mountain water at the very bottom, rushing along among the rocks; and the growth of trees and flowers—from the giant redwoods, the living monarchs of the earth, down to the tiniest of mountain flowers, all amassed together in every available space. The mountains gradually slope downward to the foot-hills, in shades of green in winter and of brown in late summer. From the foot-hills there is a gentle, gradual slope to the cliffs, and below them the sandy beaches that border—part on the Pacific Ocean and part on Monterey Bay.

Santa Cruz is a thriving little city, with its homes—beautiful homes, modest homes and poorer homes; its business blocks, its churches and schools, and its factories, and, above all—not to be forgotten—the famous Casino and Natatorium, which guard one of the finest bathing beaches on the Pacific Coast. Here is the place where all Californians love to gather in the summer time to frolic on the sands, to sport in the gentle waves, to drive along the cliffs or beyond among the

hills and mountains, to fish in the bay or in the mountain streams, to rest, to dream and to enjoy "Beautiful" Santa Cruz, where the silent, deep-blue mountains look down on the sea and the ever-restless sea calls back to the mountains. Here, along the San Lorenzo as it gently falls from the lofty ridges, passing through deep canyons, passing through the beautiful city, until it at last reaches the sea, you may in one day breathe the breath of the redwoods mingled with that of woodland flowers, or inhale the fresh, salt sea air.

Is it any wonder, then, that with such surroundings there should be beautiful drives? Here, indeed, is a place for a tourist with an automobile.

The first drive will take the sightseer westward, through the city, and thence along the cliffs overlooking the bay, passing beautiful homes ideally situated where they command the marine view as well as that of the beach, city and distant mountains. After passing Light House Point, with its characteristic light house, at the entrance of the harbor, he continues along the cliffs of the ocean, often pink with the little blossom of the *mesembryanthemum*, and with sandy beaches or jutting rocks below. Thus as he rides, the traveler may watch Father Neptune as he lashes his fiery steeds against the rocks, or the huge combers as they advance shoreward sending a thin veil of white spray behind, then with an innumerable retinue of whitecaps in the rear. Or it may be

that the waves are only gentle ripples that murmur softly with the summer breeze as they roll upon the pebbles of the beaches. Again it may be that the silvery moonbeams will sparkle upon the churning waters while he rides.

After riding several miles along the cliffs, the tourist may, if he wish, continue further up the coast by turning a short space inland. Then he proceeds with the rolling hills at his right and the gentle, green slope on the left, with the ocean not far in the distance. This drive continues, passing grain fields, dairies of Holsteins peacefully grazing on the many hills, and over little streams that creep along, laughing, sparkling, until at length they mingle their waters with that of the mighty Pacific. In due time the traveler arrives at Davenport, the site of the Portland Cement plant. If he wish he may return, or continue further passing through cool, woody places, up steep hills, then down again, often reaching the rocky coast and riding for some distance along the cliffs or by the beaches, listening to the incessant roar of the tumbling water.

After a delightful ride, in time the sightseer will cross the line into San Mateo County and soon pass Pigeon Point, with its imposing light house, and New Years Island, a short distance from the mainland. As he advances, winding along between the great hills with sometimes fertile valleys lying between them and through several sea-coast towns, he at length comes to Pescadero,

with its famous beach of rare pebbles. By going further the traveler, after passing along among hundreds of great hills, finally reaches the broad artichoke country of Half Moon Bay. Then, over the hills inland, twisting, turning, rising, he reaches the very summit where he can look down on it all. Down again, the opposite side, crossing the Spring Valley lake, he arrives at Belmont, from which place it is only a short ride to the great Metropolis of the West—San Francisco.

The second drive, perhaps the most famous, will take the tourist through the San Lorenzo canyon, among the giant redwoods. He leaves the main street of the city, and after passing through the northern limits enters the canyon, famous for its variety of vegetation. First he passes through a grove of sycamore trees standing so densely that they almost meet overhead, leaving space only for a narrow ribbon-like stretch of pale-blue sky.

Advancing, the sightseer passes a multitude of kingly forest trees mantled in emerald shades, from the pale green of the maple and alder to the dark green of the oak, and California laurel with its peculiar spicy aroma. The stately pine, the feathery fir, the attractive madrone with its dark green, richly varnished leaves showing against the reddish peeling bark, which in the springtime puts forth great panicles of small, white waxen bells which in autumn change to clusters of crimson berries, are associated together; and are all ever-green, so that judging by the trees of this grand



canyon, it is hard to determine between summer and winter.

But most admirable and numerous of all are the tall, slender redwoods that rise, gracefully drooping their evergreen branches and emitting a delicious fragrance, to a wonderful height—so that all other trees appear as mere pigmies.

Beneath this kingly army are smaller attendants — trailing vines, delicate ferns, pleasing shrubs, and gayest flowers. The wild currant, with its clusters of fresh, pink flowers; the wild lilac, both pale blue and white, so compact that they often tint the distant hillsides; and hazel bushes, often bearing nuts—abound, as well as brakes and sword ferns, thimble-berry bushes, with their large white flowers with crumpled petals which are deliciously fragrant; and a retinue of many-colored mountain flowers that love the shady places beneath—the iris, violets, buttercups and lilies.

As the road continues, the excursionist has at his left the rising tree-covered slopes, and at his right the deep canyon; sometimes broad, with a thick growth of tall, slender redwoods, rising to such a height that it seems as if they were eager to touch the sky; sometimes narrow, leaving only room at the bottom for the San Lorenzo as it hurries along, dancing and singing among the huge boulders. Presently, after a delightful ride through this natural park, along this road of many turns and sharp curves, through shady as well as

sunny places, the traveler reaches the branch road that leads down to the grove of giant redwoods.

After seeing these "oldest and largest living inhabitants of the earth," he may return to the main road and proceed further to see more of the wonders of the Santa Cruz Mountains. After passing Felton, a small settlement in an open valley, he whirls along the winding road, passing mountain homes and woody places, until Ben Lomond, with its picturesque summer hotels and cottages bordering along the river, is reached. Brookdale is the next resort. Here are hundreds of rustic cottages, so hidden among the trees and shrubs that each cannot easily see their next-door neighbor.

But the grandest part of the ride will be from Boulder Creek, a lumber town, on up onto the higher mountains, winding and turning, upgrade, until near the summit the sightseer stops his car, awed with the grandeur of the sublime scenery that stretches before him. Directly below lies the Little Basin; beyond it the rising mountain ridges with their higher peaks, as far as the eye can see; and all tree-covered. It is a beautiful view, with the clear, cerulean sky above and the warm sunlight sifted gently over it all—together with the deep shadows. Indeed, it is a living picture painted by Nature, with colors of blue and green flaked with silver and gold; a picture painted by an unseen hand with a brush of sunbeams. As the traveler continues his ride, he passes through the gateway, hewn through the top

of the mountain, and then begins to descend, down, down the ever-turning road on the opposite side of the mountain into the Big Basin. Down at the very bottom, nurtured by the heavy rains of winter and the fogs from the nearby ocean in summer, stand the giant redwoods, perhaps no larger than those of the San Lorenzo canyon but ever so many more of them, standing almost as thick as blades of grass, with masses of rich, shiny huckleberry foliage beneath. Here is the place for the picnicker to eat his lunch and while away the noonday hours and then return to Santa Cruz before nightfall.

The third drive takes the sightseer, after leaving the city, between the hills into Scott's valley—fertile with farming lands, orchards, dairies and happy homes. As he proceeds he enters the higher mountains, with their wondrous growth of trees and flowers. The mighty redwoods stand like sentinels along the path as the car goes gliding along for many a mile, up hill and down dale, through the cool shadows. Often a small mountain brook, bordered with ferns and mosses, or companies of golden buttercups or modest baby-blue-eyes, gently wanders onward, or more swiftly plunges over the rocks singing to the traveler as he passes and breathes the breath of the redwoods mingled with that of sweet grasses and flowers.

After little more than an hour's ride the little town of Glenwood, nestled among the mountains, is reached; here the driver turns and takes a road

that leads back over one of the mountains. At the highest point he may pause to drink in the magnificent view which lies before him—a picture of ridges, and broad valleys or deep canyons that lie between them. In the distance upon the highest range lies the crown of all—the blue dome-shaped mountain, Loma Prieta. To the southward a glimpse of the blue water of the bay is visible on a clear day. In returning to the city the tourist may come through Blackburn Gulch, thus receiving a variety of mountain grandeur.

The fourth drive is from Santa Cruz along the main county road to the picturesque village of Soquel, four miles distant; thence turning into the mountains and continuing through the canyon of the Soquel. This in many ways resembles that of the San Lorenzo ride, only it is broader and contains more in the way of farms and orchards. The traveler may go as far as he likes over this road, even over the mountains into the Santa Clara valley, to San Jose and San Francisco. Returning, however, he may take the scenic road over Mountain View, a lofty ride, rich in scenery, vineyards, as well as other vegetation, and health resorts; descending again into Doyle Gulch, he at length reaches the county road again.

The fifth drive is through the city to the east and along the cliffs that overlook Monterey Bay, passing Seabright and Twin Lakes, two suburban seaside resorts. As he continues the sightseer has at his right the crescent-shaped bay, with the ever-

restless, spumy waves rolling upon the sandy beaches; and far across the water he will see the blue mountains of Monterey. At his left he will see neat homes, surrounded by flowers and trees, and, if it be in the springtime, the empty fields will be carpeted with wild flowers, the golden California poppy, or *copa de oro*, and the blue lupine predominating. In the distance are the Santa Cruz Mountains, with Loma Prieta, who from her lofty position like a queen smiles down from her throne on her favorite county.

After reaching Capitola, another seaside resort, the driver turns inland for a mile until he reaches Soquel. Here he enters the main county road and, continuing eastward, soon passes Aptos, where the redwoods come down to the sea; then whirls along among the hills, leaving behind orchards, grain-fields, dairies and farm-homes, until at length Watsonville—the sister city—which lies in the center of the broad and fertile Pajaro valley—the valley of apples and strawberries—is reached. Here the tourist may, if it be in April, inhale the sweet perfume of the apple blossom, or, if it be in October, the breath of the apple itself mingled with that of the strawberry.

If he wish, in returning, for a variety of scenery he may go by the San Andreas road, nearer the coast, which enters the main road near Aptos.

Nor are these all the drives about Santa Cruz worthy of mention. They are too numerous to describe. The Empire grade, to Bonny Doon, is as

grand a ride as any, or through the De Laveaga park and down the famous cork-screw road into Blackburn Gulch. Best of all, perhaps, is the trip to the top of Loma Prieta mountain via the Soquel canyon, where the sightseer can look down upon the entire county and the broad Pacific, as well as into the beautiful Santa Clara valley.

Is it any wonder, then, considering all these beautiful attractions, if we who were born here and know of all these marvelous environs, should ask why more people do not come here to make this city their home—here in the West, where they may live out of doors nearly every day of the year, among these beautiful things God has given us—and be happy and healthy? Is it because they do not know of it?

## AFTERWARD.

There is one other incident which belongs to this story to make it complete—"The Lovers." It was not, however, until six years later.

And, after all, Bill did not make any mistake. That night when he thought he had killed Tom, he did kill him. The little, old, worthless Tom did die that night; but in his place a new Tom arose—a Tom that meant to work as well as play. And it was a good thing, too, that Bill went away, just as he did, for if he did not Tom might never have got to "thinkin' things over."

The result was, that six years later Tom was running his own bank, as good as any one could have done. One of the older employees said one day: "He's the smartest young man I ever saw. I used to think his father was smart, but he wasn't in it 'long side of Tom. I used to think that Tom would inherit his father's awful temper, but he doesn't seem to. Sometimes he gets a little mad, but it passes away almost as quickly as it comes."

And Bill, too, was in the bank, helping Tom to run it. One morning Tom walked over to where Bill sat, busy at his desk with his books, and said:

"Bill, I'm goin' to get married."

"Who to, Tom?"

"Remember Jessie?"

"Jessie! Why, Tom! Have you asked her yet?"

"No, but I'm goin' to. What's the matter?"

"Why, Tom! Jessie's as good as engaged to me!"

"Is she? Well, why didn't you say so? You always said that you were never going to marry."

"I didn't really mean it. I was waiting till I had more money."

Then for a moment there was silence. For the second time in his life, Tom was knocked speechless.

"I suppose," Bill began solemnly, as he made a pretense of marking in his books, "it would be better for Jessie if you marry her; you can do so much more for her than I."

"Well, let's toss. I always like to settle things peacefully. That's the best way to settle it."

"I hate to toss for a girl, Tom."

"I'll do it." With that Tom took a coin from his pocket and threw it toward the ceiling. "Heads or tails, Bill?" he asked as he threw the coin.

"Heads."

The coin came down to the floor. For a moment both young men looked at it in silence. Tom spoke first:

"I'm sorry, Bill—anyway you shall have your raise of pay."

Then Tom went away and Bill was left alone for a few days. But why should Bill care? He had always loved Tom. It was best for Jessie,



too; and what was best for her was best for Bill. Besides, how could a plain, ordinary man like Bill expect a girl to marry him when there was a handsome young banker in the field?

In a few days Tom came back. He entered the office and walked up to Bill's desk, and, leaning over his shoulder, softly said:

"I'm back again, Bill."

"Back again?" Bill spoke sadly, without turning.

"Bill, I suppose I may as well tell you first as last."

"Yes, Tom, tell me all about it." While speaking he scratched with his pen.

"Bill." Then Tom paused.

"Yes, Tom."

"It's not me she wants; it's you. I'm glad, though; it's as it should be. You knew her first. I got to thinkin' things over, and I went fishin' instead. Fishin's good now." Here Tom's voice began to quiver. In a moment he controlled himself, and continued: "Besides I know another girl that I think will suit me better. You've done a great deal for me—more than YOU can ever know—Bill."











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